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From Tarsus to Rome : the story of
the first Christian hierarchy

FROM TARSUS TO ROME



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FROM TARSUS TO ROME

*The Story of the First Christian
Hierarchy*

BY

HERMAN J. HEUSER, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF CANON SHEEHAN," ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
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FOREWORD

THE following sketches give an outline of the earliest *hierarchical* institution in the Church of Christ, as we glean it from the history of the Apostle Paul.

A former volume, the first of a trilogy dealing with the beginnings of ecclesiastical administration, drew a picture of Jewish homelife, which might help the reader to an approximate realization of the local background and the atmosphere in which believers in the Messianic promises found themselves at the time of Christ.

This was followed by the issue of "The House of Martha at Bethany," in which we sought to recall from rabbinical tradition and patristic records an image of the religious community-life, with its *devotional* and *liturgical* practices, as established while Our Blessed Lady and the Apostles were still living. These

communities, we have every right to believe, observed the injunctions of their Divine Master given to them during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. Apart from the institution of the sacramental mysteries, with their essential rites of administration, the devotional and liturgical services consisted of (a) adaptions to the new life of evangelical perfection taken from the Jewish ceremonial and approved synagogal traditions inculcated by the Law of Moses; (b) a solemn celebration of the festive and penitential psalmody, as accompaniment to the Breaking of the Eucharistic Bread; finally (c) the daily reading of portions from the Old Testament, in conjunction with matins and vesper prayers at which deacons (deaconesses) and priests presided.

The series is complete in the outline of the primitive *hierarchical* institution immediately after Christ's Ascension to Heaven. The material for the study is offered in the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles exercising the various

functions of the priestly ministry and the episcopate. These had their root in kindred offices of the Hebrew Church under the Levitic and Aaronic ordinances.

While "From Tarsus to Rome" is not in any sense a biography which seeks to settle disputed points of historical and chronological tradition, it presents the Apostle's career by concentrating attention upon the co-ordination of the sacerdotal ministry under the sovereign authority of Peter, as recognized by the faithful in Asia, Africa, and Europe during the first century after Christ. Approved opinions of sacred and profane historians have been followed with the freedom warranted by the composition of place, time, and personality, and facilitating both the study of the New Testament, and the understanding of the official administration in the Christian Church.

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FROM TARSUS TO ROME





FROM TARSUS TO ROME

CHAPTER ONE

JULIOPOLIS — THE CILICIAN TARSUS

THE glowing brightness of the meridian sun, on a day in late August, set into brilliant relief a Roman vessel whose rich bunting and white sails bore the letters S. P. Q. R.¹ as it glided into the silvery channel of the river Cydnus. The magnificent spectacle might well have aroused others besides the imperial herald who came in advance with a proud consciousness of his mission, for accompanied by his band of trumpeters and messengers

¹ Senatus Populus-Que Romanus, the initials of the phrase standing for the authority of the Roman empire.

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holding aloft the beflagged trophies of Mercury, he was to announce the approach of Cæsar's ambassador. This dignitary brought an official message from the Roman Senate to the authorities of Juliopolis, whose crowds of eager citizens hastened to the river to hear the news.

On the western shore rose the sumptuous palaces of the merchant princes from Phœnicia, Greece, Rome, and the East, and the magazines and warehouses of the commercial capital; whilst beyond could be seen the rich plains that sloped toward the Taurus Mountains. On the opposite bank the eye was held by the white splendor of Corinthian arcades that surrounded the marble square of the great *Academia*. This centre of culture comprised acres of groves and also groups of smaller schools where the intellectual élite of the Asiatic world held sway. The renown of ancient Athens and of Rome was fast passing toward the East. For this reason the Cæsars, in order to retain their claim of being the

patrons of intellectual culture, had long considered giving their name to this city of Tarsus as a special distinction. Hence the new title Juliopolis was bestowed upon the ancient Samnite town located on the Cydnus.

The Roman ambassador had sailed in his trireme from the Neapolitan harbor of the *Civitas Fœderata*, on the coast of Campania along the Mediterranean shore as official legate to announce the death of Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus at Nola. It was a matter of importance to have the inhabitants at Tarsus duly apprised of this event. For, despite their Roman citizenship, they were known to maintain a strong sense of native patriotism. This they derived on the one hand from their traditions as Asiatic colonists; on the other, from their Jewish prerogatives as descendants of a race established there long ere Greece and Rome had acquired ascendancy in trade and in intellectual achievement.

The news of Cæsar's death was met in the city with a mixed sentiment of regret and

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satisfaction. Those who mourned were men who had been the special recipients of his favor — chiefly those active in the political arena; whilst there was rejoicing amongst those who had resented the interference of Roman officialdom with the natural instincts of racial and religious independence. Amongst the latter were certain teachers — Greek academicians. These, while availing themselves of the honored title of a free city — in which they had access to Hellenist libraries and schools, and to the halls of Syrian stoics and the Hebrew synagogues where wisdom was being imparted to the youth of Tarsus — deemed the announcements made by Roman authorities a sort of humiliation to men of their scholarly attainments. The news of Cæsar's death was in fact known some time before the herald had come to make official announcement of it; and a number of the academicians were actually discussing the matter, and conjecturing how it would affect, for the time being, the legislative attitude of

the Roman Senate toward the colonists. Sitting near them, on the steps of the gymnasium, attentive to their lively dispute, was a Hebrew youth, known by the Benjamite name of Saul.

Saul was a student of the Law as propounded by the interpreters of Gamaliel, the famous rabbanan at Jerusalem. Later, while Annas was High Priest there, he was sent to the Holy City to study under Gamaliel himself. The latter, heir to the wisdom of the great Hillel, had by his teaching made a deep impression on both the Hebrew and Hellenistic followers of Moses. "Seek thee a wise teacher rather than follow thine own inspirations" became a byword which thousands of disciples quoted as their motive for attending his famous school. Here dignitaries of the Sanhedrim might be found to mingle with philosophers of the Diaspora; whereas youths who had attained the age for admittance to the synagogue, felt that to have sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the Master, became a distinction which served as a title of honor through life.

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Saul's parents had come originally from Giscala. This was a town in the Galilean mountain district, which had long resisted the aggressive inroads of the Roman army. Its inhabitants being ultimately forced to surrender had nevertheless retained something of their native pride of race. Those who, being driven into exile, further north, found themselves obliged to abandon their century-old habits of cultivating the fruitful soil of northern Palestine, were compelled to seek a livelihood in the prevailing industry of tanning and weaving, which distinguished the middle and humbler classes of the Cilician district. The commercial trade centre of Asia Minor was Tarsus.

The ancestors of the Galilean immigrants into Cilicia were chiefly descendants of Benjamin, son of the Right Hand, whose mother had died as she gave birth to Benoni, the child of her sorrow. Benjamin was the only one of Jacob's sons who could claim the promised land of Canaan as his native country. For

this reason the tribe that bore his name in afterdays (the Benjamite tribe), albeit the smallest of the twelve, was of chief importance and, in a sense, identified with Jerusalem, since the Temple actually stood upon the borderline between its territory and that of Judah. Of Benjamin, Moses had prophesied, “The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety, guarded by him”¹; and the movement of Israel for freedom from the yoke of the Philistine had its beginning in the election of Saul the Benjamite as king. The combats which followed upon Saul’s death only proved the courage and fortitude of his people, bent upon the maintenance of their inborn rights and their loyalty to the Law of Israel.

Thus the members of the tribe, though forced to abandon their homesteads in southern Palestine, and later in Galilee, retained the distinguishing mark of national independence and opposition to conventional assimilation with Roman culture. They maintained,

¹ Deut. 33: 12.

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however, an uncompromising respect for law and authority. And as law and liberty rested alike on the basis of the Mosaic religion, it became in time a deep-rooted conviction, if not also a passion with the young Hebrew disciple who, in the schools of Tarsus, bore the name of Saul. To him Juliopolis was merely a name indicative of imperial pride; though it served as a guaranty of rights to those who accepted Cæsar as the representative of public order, appointed by God to protect religion.



CHAPTER TWO

SAUL, THE STUDENT

EVERYWHERE, both in Palestine and in the countries where the dispersed children of Abraham had settled, there existed a marked separation, if not hostility, between Greek and Jew. To the latter the Hellenic race represented "the Gentile," uncircumcized — an enemy of Jehovah's chosen people and of the Law. The Jew felt superior to his cultured neighbor by reason of what he believed the foreordained privilege — exclusively his — of participation in the promise of the Messiah's kingdom. But this did not prevent him from sharing, through their common inheritance of natural wisdom, the ethical teaching which the Greek philosophers imparted. And since the Greek language had become, to a great extent, the sole medium, among exiled Jews,

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of propagating as well as of interpreting this wisdom, the latter had no hesitation in frequenting Greek schools for furthering their own legislative, scholastic, and even commercial purposes. In fact, after the Roman conquest, Greek speech was preferred to the popular Aramaic Dialect, at least by the educated Jew and his fellows in nearly all the imperial dependencies.

There was a recognized difference between the philosophy of the Pelasgian sages and that contained in the ancient Wisdom Code of the Jews. The latter presented supreme knowledge in form, fact, and precept; whilst the pagan teacher was speculative, and explained truth as the outcome of reason rather than a basis of religion. From the observation of the laws of life and of nature, the pagan derived his belief in God as their source. The Hebrew, on the contrary, began with belief in God and thence deduced the laws of right living and religious worship. He assumed the facts of Creation, of Providence, and a Divine

Personality as the conditions which make of man a responsible being, and free to choose good or evil.

To a thoughtful mind the consideration of the two systems of philosophy — one taking as a premise Cause, and the other Effect — offered a rare attraction. This accounts for Saul's eager attendance at schools of the University of Tarsus, though he retained all the while his native prejudice against the Hellenizing Gentiles who belittled Hebrew traditions. Hence, while the young Hebrew student became a frequenter of Syrian, Babylonian and Italian sections of the *Academia*, and an admirer of western and oriental literature, he regarded these teachings merely as accidental rays of the light issuing from the great central sun represented by the Law of Jehovah.

Since the law of obedience to the Divine ordinances traced its origin to our first parents¹ and was definitely committed to writing by Moses, in the Pentateuch, this Book became

¹ Gen. II : 16; III : 15.

the chief authoritative source of study for the Hebrew youths, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. As a legal code, supplemented by the sapiential parts, it set forth and safeguarded the triple discipline of the ceremonial (liturgical), civil, and moral (ethical) Law. It regulated the sacrificial, festal, and sacramental service to Jehovah, who is the Supreme Cause and Preserver of all things. Next, it dealt with the judicial and civil order of social life, outlining the obligations of and to the temporal authorities; the duties of hospitality to strangers; and the interest to be taken in the welfare of the people at large. Finally, it prescribed the Moral Law as set forth in the Decalogue, with its precepts and the penalties attached to their violation.

During this period of his studies Saul learned to understand and to value the obligations and motives that prompt voluntary and loyal obedience to parental, civil, and religious authority proceeding from God, the Creator and Protector of Israel. Keeping these

obligations in mind our young student was not carried away by the extraordinary eloquence of sophists like Euthydemos, or by the stoic Athenodorus, or Nestor, who had been tutor to Tiberius Cæsar. During Saul's adolescence, and also while he attended the *Academia*, these men appear to have been among the teachers most admired in the schools of philosophy and encyclic training at Tarsus, which schools, for a time, surpassed in renown those of Athens and Alexandria. Saul had passed his thirteenth year, and had become what was technically termed a "Son of the Commandment." Accordingly he might freely study the Talmudic traditions of the *Halacha* and become entitled to rank among the "pupils of the Wise."

As there was no great difficulty in reaching Jerusalem, both by the Syrian land route, and by vessel from Tarsus, it is not unlikely that Saul began to attend, when still quite young, the school of Gamaliel. The latter, though not of equal rank with the High Priest, was

regarded as an authorized interpreter of the Law, who could claim to be free from those narrow prejudices which caused the Pharisaic teachers to regard the study of Hellenic philosophy as tending to undermine Hebrew orthodoxy. The *Agora* brought together disciples of every sect to mental discipline. They came hither to study medicine, astronomy, mathematics, or else to speculate upon the tenets of the Peripatetics; of Plato; or of those grosser pantheists, the Epicureans. We may well believe that Joseph Barnabas from Paphos, and the Antiochian Luke,—whom later destiny was to make close friends of Saul—were his fellow-students at this time not only in Jerusalem but also in Tarsus.

It was a trite saying among the teachers of the Thorah, that a father who neglected to secure for his son apprenticeship in a manual trade made of him a thief. Hence, it was customary for a Hebrew youth destined for the higher rabbinical culture, to turn spontaneously to the exercise of some useful trade.

The industry which occupied nearly every class of people at Tarsus in one way or another was that of tanning, weaving, rope and cloth-making derived from the flocks which fed upon the Cilician pastures. Like the ancient Galatian Ancyra, Cilicia had been celebrated for its special breed of goats, nourished upon the hillsides of the Taurus range. Its chief city, Tarsus, on the highway of commerce from the Babylonian and Arabian countries to Phoenicia and the Mediterranean seacoast, was the commercial centre for the manufacture of hair-cloth and skins, products in demand by the numerous caravans and nomadic herdsmen of Asia Minor. The various departments of the trade required little more than mechanical attention; and the employment at tent-making did not interfere with the student life of Saul, while at the same time fully satisfying the Jew's obligation to have a fixed manual occupation.

Study of the Law; the cultural diversion of listening to the great teachers of secular

science; exercise in the race-courses and the gymnasium attached to the *Academia* of the great University; and intermittent employment among the makers of ropes and tents — these occupied the years of the young Hebrew until he was called to take up at intervals the labors of the rabbinical offices at Antioch and Jerusalem. The training he had received had made of him a man well-informed in the liberal sciences of his time; industrious and eager to serve, with hand and heart, the cause of religion. Above all, it had grounded him firmly in the conviction that a Supreme Being overruled all action. Such was the God of Israel, whose wisdom and omnipotence were illustrated in the Law of Moses.

Whatever the influence of the rabban Gamaliel upon the intellectual and religious convictions of young Saul, it only tended to emphasize his rigid adherence to the authorities of the Pharisaic party. If he became familiar with the story of the wonderful preaching and doings of the newly heralded

Prophet Jesus of Nazareth, his attitude was from the outset one of incredulity and opposition. He belonged to that class of Cilicians who argued against the young deacon Stephen when the latter proclaimed the fulfilment of the Messianic promise. In short Saul showed himself to be a zealous defender of the Mosaic traditions, and for this reason was regarded favorably by the members of the priestly caste who in Jerusalem represented the Sanhedrim but held only limited synagogal authority outside of the Holy City.



CHAPTER THREE

SYNAGOGAL MINISTRY

THE Hebrew concept of the Church had its origin in the Mosaic ordinances which regulated prayer and divine praise at the public sacrifices in the Holy Place. The appointments necessary in connection with this function called for the establishment of a central Sanctuary, or Temple. But there were also numerous local houses of worship, where the faithful met on fixed days and hours to make common appeal, offer thanks, atone for sin, and receive the instructions which were to guide their moral conduct. Attached to the service of the Temple, — the central place of worship — and also to the different synagogues or prayer-houses and schools of religious instruction, was a band of priests and Levites who were appointed not by popular will but

by a preordained and in a sense exclusive divine authority. Respect was given to this priesthood, and obedience to each of its representatives, as though to God Himself, without regard to the personal character or gifts of the individual.

Those who had a special call to the ministry of the Sanctuary were named Levites. They were chosen from the tribe of Levi; and in general represented the class of official servants of the Temple who claimed descent from Aaron, the brother of Moses. But, for special reasons sanctioned by a divinely approved precedent, men of the non-Levitical descent were commissioned to discharge limited functions of the Hebrew priesthood. These were assisted by minor ministers, who performed manifold duties attached to the services marked for the sacred seasons of the annual cycle of feasts and fasts commanded by the Law of Moses.

Saul of Tarsus was not a descendant of Aaron, nor strictly allied to the tribe of Levi. He was not even associated with the clan of

David whose members enjoyed special prerogatives relative to service in the Temple. But his elders were Pharisees, and from his earliest years he had manifested a vocation which later brought him into close contact with the rabbinical and priestly element at Jerusalem.

A special training for the various synagogal offices was required from those who conducted the exercises of Jewish devotion. For this purpose houses of retreat had been established for Levites and priests, much like the monastic centres of later ages. Indeed, as early as Ahimelech, the chief priest of Nob under the reign of King Saul — there were the “cities of the priests” in which different classes of Sanctuary attendants might be trained, and where the temple singers and doorkeepers were housed, as the acolytes and minor-order men of later seminaries. Young Saul must have passed through the usual course of preparation for eventual admission to the Levitical circle whose High Priest resided in the Holy City, though no account of the fact is re-

corded in the Sacred Writings or in Jewish tradition.

The Deuteronomic Code assures us that the ministers connected with the Temple and synagogue were required to serve the sick — lepers in particular; to give catechetical instruction, and to exhort and bless the soldiers who went out to fight the hostile armies that threatened the safety of Israel. In Saul's day the priests under the approval of the High Priest constituted the tribunal at Jerusalem which rendered judicial decisions, and in general regulated disciplinary activity in the Church. It also settled difficult lawsuits through a local court of *shopherim* composed mainly of priests, although the Law admitted the right of lay judges to attend.

These circumstances throw light on the attitude of mind which animated Saul, relative to the Mosaic Law, the Jerusalem priesthood, with its predominantly Pharisaic elements, and the current traditions that pointed to the restoration of a Messianic kingdom.

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The latter differed widely from the conception of it formed by the followers of the newly proclaimed Prophet from Galilee. Hence Saul felt it his sacred duty to oppose their influence by maintaining the teachings of the Pharisaic school. This he meant to do loyally, as became a true Hebrew.



CHAPTER FOUR

PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

IN THE Cilician's vernacular the idea of "Sovereign Pontiff" was not clearly defined as was that of the High Priest in the mind of the Jew. Yet the title was used by both alike. It might well be given to the heads of those great Roman and Greek colleges, instituted for the purpose of preserving and cultivating religious knowledge. To them belonged the supervision of sacred rites and ceremonies, the regulation of the calendar, and of public festivals. They were the judges of last appeal in all matters of religion; and they had power to inflict punishment on those who disobeyed their injunctions, being responsible neither to the Senate nor to the people. Such was the imperial tradition since the days of Numa. As though by analogy the priestly Code of the

sons of Aaron was recognized as the supreme authority of the High Priest and his college of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

In both cases the religious ceremony of investiture required a special priestly attire. Over the white robe or alb was worn a signet or ephod. As festive occasion called for it, the sacrificial ministers wore garments of different colors in harmony with the decoration of the Sanctuary. These were white, crimson, blue-purple and red-purple. The *Ha-Kohen* or High Priest, also called *Ha-Mashiah*, or the Anointed,¹ was initiated by a sacred unction which conferred the dignity that was to last for life.² He alone, the white-robed pontiff, entered the Holy of Holies on the day of Atonement.³ He alone wore the breastplate in which are encased the *Urim* and *Thummim*. He pronounced *infallible* judgment before Jehovah, and the decisions of the Divine Oracle by which Israel must ever abide. Upon his

¹ Lev. IV: 3; VI: 15.

² Numb. XXXV: 25, 28.

³ Lev. XVI: 4, 23, 32.

head he wore the golden diadem inscribed "Holy to Jehovah," which symbolized his sacred office as pontiff, his headship of the priestly college, and his rank as prince of the Tribes and the Judges of Israel.¹

The deep sense of reverence which Saul of Tarsus manifested for the High Priest at Jerusalem, as representing the Jehovah, was not due alone to his study of the Thorah, or the tradition of his Benjamite elders, whose strong rabbinical prejudices had been emphasized by their isolation in Galilee, and later in Cilicia. He had been further strengthened by the Roman sectarian cult, although his orthodoxy protested against the latter as an assumption not sanctioned by divine authority. He merely recognized in it an element founded in the very nature of religious profession.

At the feet of Gamaliel Saul had learned that the world is kept from destruction by three things: Law, Labor, and Love. These he would ever keep before him as guiding

¹ Cf. Eleazar; Num. XXXIV: 17; and Jos. XIV: 1.

principles, as stars in the heavens directing the course of the mariner. It was in this mood that he arrived at the Temple to offer his services to Caiphas. He wanted to assist repelling the advances of the new Prophet whose preaching, people said, was beginning to stir the multitudes with admiration throughout Judea and the very centre of Hebrew worship, Jerusalem. A native sense of justice, charity, toleration, kindly judgment of a neighbor before condemning him, might have influenced the Hebrew apostle from Tarsus to exercise caution and to become acquainted with the actual doctrines and doings of the wonderful Son of Joseph the Carpenter, if he had but heeded at the time the example of Apollonius of Tyana, the thaumaturgist and proclaimer of a new religion, whose sensational fame had become a byword throughout Cilicia. However, Saul had no doubt been cautioned by his teachers against the "danger of being misled by a false announcement of the Messianic fulfilment." This would justify

his avoidance of the friends of Jesus whom he might have met in the Holy City and elsewhere. What he learnt about them seemed but the aberration of weak-minded men following the attractions of novel doctrine. Under these circumstances it was but natural that the High Priest Caiphas and his father-in-law Annas should make of Saul a ready and efficient tool to counteract the influence of the Christian teaching.



CHAPTER FIVE

GREAT COUNCIL OF THE SANHEDRIM

IT MAY be safely assumed that Saul's earlier journeys to Jerusalem, while a student of the Law of Israel, led him to take part in the great festival celebrations of the Jewish calendar. He would thus be brought into more intimate relations with the chief priests of the Sanhedrim. Here sat in council the great court of justice and appeal, which included Levites and hereditary heads of houses united in the *Beth Din Haggadol*, the college of seventy (one), whose functions and authority extended over the Jewish people at large.

During the Hasmonian or Maccabean rule the High Priest had become once more the head of the state, and as a prince of the realm he exercised administrative and political to-

gether with judicial and religious authority. Although under the Roman government, this power was modified, the chief priests or rulers retained in their service numerous scribes, elders, and trained legal doctors whose activities greatly increased the influence of the Pharisaic and kindred sects associated with the executives of the Herodian or the imperial parties.

According to the canonical code of the time, certain qualifications were deemed requisite for membership in the Sanhedrim. We read that Moses¹ had been told to bring to the gate of the Tabernacle "seventy men of the ancients of Israel, known to be elders and masters of the people." "Masters of the people" were men understood to be learned, courageous, and strong. The rabbi Jochanan adds to these qualities those of a bearing indicating reverence, and the modesty and reserve befitting the aged. Similar sacred councils, of local importance, had been formed in different

¹ Numb. XI : 16.

parts of the Jewish Diaspora. Their members were required to know the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and to have a knowledge of the religious rites in use among Babylonians and Egyptians.

With succeeding generations the power which the heads of the Sanhedrim exercised, assumed the character not merely of spiritual or religious authority but extended to temporal government. At Herod's time the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the High Priest and his court was being urged beyond its strictly legitimate limits. It controlled Jewish delinquents throughout Palestine, and inflicted penalties upon them excepting only that of capital punishment which was reserved to the Roman court.

The sessions of the Sanhedrim lasted, with brief interruption, from the morning sacrifice in the Temple to vespers, and were ordinarily conducted in the "Hall of Stone," but in exceptional instances its members met at the house of the High Priest. Only on the Sab-

bath and Jewish feast-days were the courts closed, so as not to interfere with the extended ceremonial worship. Among the cases reserved to the judgment of the Great Council of the High Priest at Jerusalem was the trial of men who claimed the prerogatives of prophet, and who were accused of inciting rebellion against the priesthood and the Temple.

About this time the report of political uprisings, tending to compromise the position of the Temple authorities and disturb the Jewish colonists in Galilee and Samaria, caused the Sanhedrim to assemble for the purpose of agreeing on a definite policy toward the agitators. The Sadducees and Pharisees of the more aristocratic divisions seized the opportunity to identify the rebellious movement with the newly organized sect of Nazarenes, whose aims and principles were attracting large numbers, and who were known as followers of "Jesus, the Carpenter's Son."



CHAPTER SIX

SAUL, THE PHARISEE

THE EXTRAORDINARY opportunities for study which Saul enjoyed in the schools of Tarsus, had undoubtedly enlightened his mind as to the value of an ethical training which would produce desirable converts among Gentiles. Many of the proselytes allowed to share the Temple privileges in Jerusalem and to participate in the synagogal worship elsewhere were of this class. The predominant religious passion which influenced Saul in his views of morality arose from the fact that he was the son and grandson of Pharisees. The education that fitted him to be a scribe, to whom was committed the important office of exposing and interpreting the Law of Moses, loomed important to him only because it marked his calling in life to be a Pharisee. A Hebrew scribe

might be either a Pharisee or a Sadducee, both classes being represented in the Sanhedrim; but the distinctive faith and the mode of life professed by the former, at least since the time of Hyrcanus, if not earlier, gave a superior and aristocratic character to members of that body.

The Pharisees formed a select Levitical corps of men who, as their name (Perusim — "set apart from the people") implied, practised a strict asceticism in their mode of life. Their abstinence, from certain foods, their habits of separation, and their formal methods of prayer rested for the most part upon a literal interpretation of the Mosaic Law. They had a saying that, "God created the world for the purpose of illustrating the Thorah," which expressed the principle regulating their observance in the synagogue, and in the public eye generally. In the term Thorah (Law) they included not only the written Code of the Pentateuch, but also the traditions of the so called Hebrew Fathers who succeeded Esdras and Nehemias.

The chief dogmatic tenets which distinguished the teaching of the Pharisees from that of the Sadducees and the more liberal-minded Jewish instructors, were the doctrines of the resurrection of the body and of future reward and punishment. They also believed in a definite hierarchical system of government of the Jewish Church, analogous to that which the prophet Zachary describes as existing among the heavenly spirits. Owing to the prevailing tendency to accept the Sacred Writings literally, they taught a belief in predestination which excluded those who did not follow the Law of Moses. Their faith in the coming of a Messiah and in the supremacy of Israel was naturally colored by the remembrance of the temporal advantages enjoyed during the Golden Age of their nation, under the reigns of David and Solomon. They believed that the temporal kingdom would be restored, with even greater magnificence and power; and it was this conviction that made them fundamentally hostile to the Roman

dynasty, and, in a certain way, especially so to Herod's pretensions to kingship. Under such conditions Saul came to Jerusalem, with a prideful sense of superiority and of a calling, as a Pharisee, to follow the profession of his elders, while not forgetful of his rights as a Roman citizen of Cilicia.

To join the school of the Pharisees he had only to declare his creed and to adopt the practice then prevailing of wearing the phylacteries in public. These phylacteries were small black cases worn, one on the upper left arm, and the other upon the forehead between the eyes. They were secured by leather straps that hung over the shoulders. These cases had four (sometimes only three) compartments, in which were inserted (written on parchment slips) quotations from the Law. These were symbolic of the wearer's resolve to observe the Law of Moses unto death.

Although any Hebrew might wear the phylactery as a mark of his orthodoxy, it was exhibited publicly only by those who made

particular profession of ascetic observance. The phylacteries of the Pharisees were, as a rule, larger than those of the Jewish faithful; the latter, unless they merely kept in their homes these reminders of their faith, wore them in a less conspicuous way than the men who were recognized as the religious leaders of the people. Women, slaves, and minors did not claim the right to wear the phylactery, and the inconvenience of wearing it while employed in the routine of daily toil made its appearance rare among the laboring class.

While Saul was proud to associate himself with the Pharisaic school, he could hardly have remained blind to the bigotry, formalism, and habitual exaggerations emphasizing the external importance of the letter of the Law. It was in many cases evidently but a proclamation of self-righteousness on the part of those who claimed association with the party of Assidean believers of that time. Still, because of his desire to labor for the cause of right and truth, he held fast to the conviction

that the priesthood instituted by Divine Law was the legitimate interpreter of that cause, whatever the personal shortcomings of its representatives. Moreover, among the disciples who frequented the Temple and the synagogal schools, there were no doubt many who had the same aim, and were of the same age and tastes as young Saul. These he would find congenial even if they were to show a tendency to credit the miracles of the Nazarene Prophet, and to lean toward his teachings. But so long as they were not identified with the revolutionary overtures of certain rebels from Giscala (the original domicile of Saul's family, whence it had emigrated to Tarsus), the young Pharisee ran no risk of being discredited by the members of the priestly caste.

Saul's knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, and of the Cilician and Aramaic dialects in common use by the people around him, aided him in assimilating the rabbinical principles of exegesis taught by Gamaliel and Nicodemus in the Tanaim and Amoraim schools. He could

not fail to accept the Law and the Prophets as inspired by God. But to him the written code was not a dead letter devoid of living sense; nor, on the other hand, was it an expression of supernatural wisdom that might lend itself to fanatical, esoteric, and cabalistic play of the imagination.

Whatever interest he had in pursuing the study of the Divine Law and in observing the precepts and sacred traditions of the Pharisaic section, his ardent and eager disposition to translate this doctrine and principles into action would lead him to seek by preference a missionary activity that would free him from any discordant and bigoted associations in the religious circles at Jerusalem. A desire to extend the kingdom of Israel, to do something to break up a propaganda directed against the popular concept of the Davidic restoration, led him to seek a mission from the High Priest which might lessen the attraction of Hebrew disciples to the alluring voice of the Nazarene. If his brethren, like Stephen,

were misled their defection would lead others after them to a perversion of the Law.

Apparently, Saul had not been visiting Jerusalem during the momentous period of Christ's public teaching and of his ignominious condemnation to the death of the Cross. He was still in comparative ignorance of the new Gospel proclaiming the fulfilment of the Messianic prophesies. He regarded it merely as a plausible heresy, an unlawful attack of the Divine Institution, the Mosaic Church, which called for resistance on the part of every loyal Hebrew teacher and believer. It was in this mood that he had solicited letters authorizing him to act as deputy of the sacred ministry of justice represented by the Sanhedrim and its presiding officers. He would search for the guilty members of the new sect, arrest them, and surrender them to the dual civil and religious magistracy recognized by the members of the Hebrew Church and, in a way, by the Roman governor and the tetrarch.



CHAPTER SEVEN

A SUDDEN CONVERSION

THAT Saul had been actively engaged in persecuting the disciples of Christ, who openly preached the Resurrection of their Divine Master in the streets of Jerusalem and from the Temple porch, is indicated by his attitude at the stoning of Stephen. The episode had for a time silenced the opposition on both sides and the members of the Great Council appeared satisfied that the Nazarene movement would die, or at least reduce its remnant of followers to a harmless minority.

But now there came from the north country sundry reports that belied this assumption. Christians expelled from Jerusalem and the nearby district in Judæa had sought refuge in Syria. They were growing in strength, and threatened to crowd out the Jews of that re-

gion, hitherto protected by synagogal law and the claim of Roman citizenship. They later found themselves menaced with losing certain prerogatives attached to their connection with the Holy City, whither they repaired for the festivals. Now with the increase of converts to Christianity, the danger of crowding out the Hebrew residents increased. Damascus and Antioch had been chosen as the chief centres of activity for the apostles of the new faith, and urgent measures were needed to stop the flow of the immigrants and their growing influence. Here was a work suited to the temper, gifts, and lofty religious aspirations of Saul of Tarsus. Having possessed himself of a passport which, while issued by a High Priest whose judicial power did not extend beyond Judæa, had still the nature of credentials for his (to him) sacred mission, Saul set out for Damascus. The journey of some hundred and fifty miles on horseback might take all of a week between Sabbath days.

Saul's attendants on his way northward were Hebrew Hellenists, familiar with the conditions of the trust committed to him. They regarded him as the official executive of the ordinances prohibiting the disciples of Christ from preaching in the synagogues to which these were still in the habit of flocking for public devotion as their Master had done. Yet the prosecutors could not wholly ignore the evidences of silent virtue, the charity, patience and prayerful sincerity which was manifested in the habitual conduct of these Christians. The aftermath of remorse which had begun to gnaw at the heart of Saul who could not banish the death-cry of Stephen from memory, received additional food through certain sacred landmarks which he and his party passed on their journey to Damascus.

The little band, resting their horses in the broad valley of Sichem, near Gerizim, the historic spot where the judgment of Jehovah had bidden Joshua to separate the tribes, was

reminded of the destiny allotted to Benjamin. Not far from this spot was Ebal. Here the first altar had been erected to Jehovah, the God of Abraham, and the children of Jacob had pledged themselves to a perpetual observance of the Divine Law. Thence they rode over the rough path that led through regions abounding in rich vegetation, past Succoth, Bethshean, Gadara, through the Roman settlement Capitolias, as far as the plain bordered by the sparkling waters of the river Pharpar and its tributary, the Abana, beyond.

Here too was the sacred spot where Joshua had established the first Levitical City and renewed the Lord's solemn Covenant with the children of Israel. As if to emphasize the contrast and thus give a prophetic turn to Saul's present mission, there loomed into sight the ruins of Baal Berith, a lasting monument of the fickleness of God's people when they turned to idolatry. Altogether Saul's journey kept him and his companions in a mood of serious reflection, making it a religious pil-

grimage rather than a hateful pursuit of the enemies of God.

When the party of riders had reached the canal of the Barada stream, at the southern entrance of Damascus, they were suddenly halted. A loud crash rent the air, and terrifying flashes of blinding light beat through the sky, which had grown dark and threatening. As by a violent though unseen force, the men were hurled from their frightened beasts. Amid the roar of the thundering clearly sounded a loud voice from the clouds above:

“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?”

Prostrate on the ground, they were struck dumb, for they knew not who uttered the ominous appeal. Saul alone conscious that the dread call was meant for him, broke out into an involuntary cry:

“Who art thou, Lord ?”

The reply was instant. Out of the clouds it came:

"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

The Hebrew word *korban*, as used in the sacred text, literally means a goad or rod. It was a well-understood figure of oriental speech, signifying the force that urges useful or virtuous action.¹ Saul was to understand that his God-given impulse to defend the cause of religion was being misapplied. Accordingly he continued:

"Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?"

And the Lord replied:

"Arise, and go into the city; and there it will be told thee what thou must do."

The injunction was plain. Trembling, and utterly blinded by the light which had struck him and his amazed companions — who hear-

¹ The Jewish Fathers had a common saying, "The wisdom of thy elders is a goad to right action."

ing the words only were terrified by the sudden manifestation — Saul was helped to his feet. He realized, as they did not, that this was a heavenly call, and the admonition produced in him an instant conviction which wholly altered the immediate object of his pursuit.

He groped about as he arose, for the light of his eyes had gone from him. His companions, for the moment uncertain and much disturbed, began to lead him into the city whose outskirts they had reached. To find a lodging place would not have been difficult. The southern road into the city of Damascus opens upon a broad avenue flanked by arcades on both sides from one end to the other of the town. Our travellers were bound for the house of Jehudah, (Judah) well known as one of the chief citizens of the town. The mysterious voice and the apparition to Saul on the road was similar to that described by the prophet Daniel under the reign of King Cyrus, and left its deep impression on those

who had witnessed it. Their prostrate leader still totally blind was unconscious, nor could he be roused to take food or drink after they carried him into the house of their host Judah. This state lasted for three full days when Saul at length awoke to a realization of his condition.

Meanwhile, the Christians at Damascus had been warned of the anathema and the danger from the Temple authorities at Jerusalem which threatened them. They anxiously assembled in prayer, awaiting the designs of God. While thus engaged one of their number named Ananias, received an inspiration to "arise and go into the street that is called 'Strait' and seek, in the house of Judas, the Pharisee Saul of Tarsus." But Ananias feared that this call in the form of a vision might be a dream or a temptation, even though it came while he was at prayer. Hence he demurred:

"Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to thy saints in Jerusalem.

And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke Thy name."

The divine command was insistent:

"Go on the way which I assign thee; for this man Saul is elected by me to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

At this same time Saul had with his whole heart given himself to prayer for forgiveness and to an ardent desire to do whatever God might command, a resolution promptly confirmed by the messenger from the persecuted disciples of Christ. When, therefore, Ananias entered Judas' house, Saul at once recognized the divinely sent monitor, and bent his head to receive the blessing of the Christian presbyter.

That instant the sight of Saul was restored, and there came over him a peace which prepared him at once for baptism and admission into the fold of Christ. With the sacramental grace he received fresh light and strength,

rousing his faculties and desires to action in a newly found mission. Ananias led him to the synagogue where the Christians were gathered for instruction and prayer. Here Saul quickly learned to translate his knowledge of the Old Testament revelation into a recognition of its fulfilment through the Messianic Advent of the Christ who had appeared and had spoken to him.

Saul's terrifying yet beneficent experience heightened his ardor and aggressive purpose; and he began at once to proclaim aloud in the local synagogue the advent of the Christ. His dwelling with Ananias, the Hebrew Christian, afforded him opportunity for confirming the faith revealed to him by the miraculous vision on the road into Damascus. But while impelled by a consuming eagerness to use his gifts of eloquence and argument on behalf of the newly found truth, he was in no position as yet to assume the authority that was called for in an accredited disciple of the crucified Master who had Himself made choice

after His Resurrection of the Apostles authorized to propagate His Gospel.

The companions of Saul who had been witnesses of the miraculous intervention that caused the sudden change in the conviction of their leader, while ready to follow him in his zeal, were yet wanting in the knowledge that would interpret to them the fulfilment of the Messianic Revelation. But he, the Pharisee, who was familiar with the prophecies announcing the Messianic Dispensation to the people of Israel, now understood that he had misconstrued their meaning. To correct the error he needed fresh study and a period of absolute retirement with continuous prayer, in order to gain the wisdom to follow whatever course Divine Providence had marked out for him. The nature of God's designs had been indicated in the words addressed to Ananias, "Saul is to be to me a vessel of election to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." It had been furthermore revealed to Ananias that, in

carrying out this high destiny the chosen Apostle was to undergo trial and suffering. These designs engaged the intimate little band of Christian converts gathered about Saul during the brief period before he yielded to the interior urging to retire into solitude, as Moses and Elias had done under a like inspiration.

Hereafter Saul was to learn, what, in spite of his extraordinary recent experience he could understand only in part, namely the full import of the mystery of the Incarnation. Christ had revealed Himself to John the son of Zachary, and his testimony had been widely proclaimed by the Baptist. Galileans, Samaritans, and proselytes from the east and the south, even Herod and his minions had flocked to the Jordan to hear the announcement that the Messiah was already in their midst. John had openly repudiated the honors paid him as if he were the Christ by declaring that he was but "a voice of one crying in the wilderness." There were multitudes of trustworthy witnesses who had seen the Spirit of God descend

upon Jesus in form of a dove, while hearing the heavenly voice: "This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matthew, the Hebrew tax-gatherer, Luke, the Antiochian physician, learned scribes like Nicodemus and many others of high repute in Hebrew circles had accepted the truth of these things despite the efforts of scribes and Pharisees to discredit them. The awakening of Eleazarus at Bethany from the grave, and the more important event of the Resurrection of the Christ Himself, who was said to have continued to instruct His disciples during forty days, were facts proved beyond any doubt unto many who at the same time professed belief in the Mosaic Dispensation.

These things had formerly escaped Saul's serious attention; not only because he was absent from the Holy City when they had occurred, but more because he was disinclined to credit what seemed to detract from the rabbinical traditions in which as a Pharisee he believed. Now, however, matters had taken on

a very different aspect, and he began to see the perverseness of his prejudices. His naturally sensitive soul yielded to a deep humility, upheld by the strength of a newborn conviction.

The subjects on which Saul was to meditate at greater length began to shape themselves more definitely in his brief association with Ananias in Damascus. The latter was well versed in the Old Testament prophecies and in the interpretation which had come to the disciples both in Galilee and in Jerusalem during the period when they conversed with their Master before His Ascension into Heaven. The Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles revealed a wide range of graces flowing from the sacramental institutions through which the merits of the Redemption were to be applied to mankind. Saul had gladly accepted the baptism which Ananias administered to him as an act of regeneration. It appealed to him in a twofold way. Like the ceremonial ablutions customary among the

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Jews and implying forgiveness of sin, it meant incorporation in the true Church of God. The symbol of Levitical purification became a reality which bore with it the hidden grace of supernatural strength and understanding.



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MESSIANIC CHURCH

THE MAIN facts of faith which, in the light of the new revelation, needed clearing and reflection in the mind of the Damascene convert centred about the continuance of the Mosaic Church, instituted by God's undoubted authority. The Law of Moses was the model which, according to God's design, was to govern the religious worship of His children on earth. That Law could not err, or contradict itself. It was clear that the eternal truths and fundamental precepts for the guidance of mankind must retain their authority to the end of time. What had been established from eternity as essential truth could neither be changed nor abrogated. Only the true principles might be extended and developed in their application to con-

ditions arising from the free exercise of the human will. In this way alone could the ills that had befallen the children of Adam as a consequence of sin be remedied. By reason of God's merciful promise a fresh trial was given to man, through the new Covenant in the Messianic kingdom.

The organization of that kingdom, theocratic in its origin, could only take its beginning in a people having a common language and united in its aspirations for truth and virtue. It implied the setting apart of a chosen race in which the Messianic promise made to Abraham, and reiterated to his descendants Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets would meet its fulfilment. In time the Hebrew people, wearying of the theocratic rule under the Judges, had called for a government like that of the Gentiles. Saul was given them as their king. Next David was chosen and became the head of the family whence would spring the Messiah. Through the Redeemer not only Israel but the entire human race was

to gain salvation and become once more heir to the Kingdom of Heaven for which Adam and his posterity had been created.

Among the Jews the expression *Redeemer* (*Goel*) applied figuratively to the power of God to deliver His people from its enemies, and had been largely restricted to the releasing of Jewish exiles from the dominion of their Gentile sovereigns. In the legal sense the term applied to a periodical returning of property to its original owner; or a fulfilment of vows, and in general to all ransom of a material kind. Moses himself was regarded as the type of a Redeemer, since he had freed his people from Egypt's yoke and led them to the promised land of Cana. He had recorded, and was the first to fulfil, the promise made to Abraham five hundred years before:

"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

The blessing of this redemption was a reward for Abraham's willingness to make sacrifice to God of his son Isaac:

"The Angel of the Lord called Abraham from heaven, saying: By my own self have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake: I will bless thee, and will multiply thy seed as the stars from heaven and as the sand that is by the sea shore: thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies."

The promise was confirmed by Balaam, the soothsayer of the King of Moab, after the victories of Israel over the Amorrhites. Summoned to curse the Jewish people, he was forced to become the prophetic mouthpiece of Jahweh, whom he acknowledges as the true God:

"A star shall rise out of Jacob and a scepter shall spring up from Israel. It shall smite the land of Moab, and destroy the children of Seth."

Soon the sacred destiny of Israel found its partial fulfilment in the triumphs of David and the golden age of Israel that followed. Again, for a time, the prophetic blessing was

frustrated by the divisions of the children of Israel and of Judah. But the prophet Jeremiah reassures his people:

“Behold the days are at hand, saith the Lord, when I will raise unto David a righteous offspring. A King shall reign and prosper, who shall execute judgment and justice over all the earth.”

The time of the Redeemer’s advent was definitely fixed by Daniel and by the later heralds inspired to speak to Israel:

“From the restoration of Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two.”

The weeks here mentioned were understood by the scribes to be periods of years, counted from the time of the edict of Artaxerxes to the public appearance of the anointed Saviour Who was to come to Jerusalem and the Temple.

Saul realized that the Messianic fulfilment had come to pass, and that the prediction of Isaiah,

"A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel (God with us),"

had been accomplished. Bethlehem Ephrata was the place whence the ruler of Israel was to go forth from everlasting. His advent was announced by a messenger who "shall prepare his way."¹ He had preached observance of the Law, and wrought miracles to prove His Divine mission as the "Anointed of the Lord," despite "the kings of the earth and the rulers of the people" who assembled against him. The words of Zachariah,²

"Rejoice, O daughter of Sion; for behold thy king cometh to thee. He is just and bringeth salvation; yet lowly he enters Jerusalem riding upon an ass,"

had become a fact, even to the extent which foretold that the Saviour would be sold for thirty pieces of silver and be condemned to an ignominious death, pierced with wounds at an hour of darkness.³ Following this the Christ

¹ Mal. III: 1.

² Zach. IX: 9.

³ Amos V: 20.

had risen from the grave and ascended gloriously into heaven,¹ fulfilling the prophecy of David, and answering the call of the Eternal Father:

“Sit Thou at my right hand, said the Lord unto my Lord, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”²

¹ Isa. XI : 10.

² Ps. CX : 1.



CHAPTER NINE

VESTIBULE AND SANCTUARY

THE MOSAIC Tabernacle with its ritual development in the Temple at Jerusalem was but the entrance gate and vestibule which would ultimately lead into the Holy of Holies wherein the Son of God was to dwell with men to the end of time. The intermediate wide space of the nave would shelter the Gentile and Hebrew nations, bidding them to look up to the cross above the rood-arch into the Sanctuary that sheltered the heavenly Ark of the Covenant. Upon its altar stone would be offered the unbloody sacrifice amid the Levitical choir of pontiff and his sacred ministry.

The innate reverence for the priestly traditions of the Jewish Temple which Saul, as descendant of an old Pharisaic family, had inherited, did not, however, lead him at once to

understand that the religious practices of the Christians at Damascus were a complete fulfilment of the ancient prophecies. He was indeed convinced that Christ was the promised Messiah, of which the voice that had spoken to him at the time of his miraculous vision left no doubt. Yet he thought that if, on the one hand, the Jerusalem priests had failed to recognize the signs of the Messianic advent, it was still possible that Ananias and his associates at Damascus might err in the interpretation and application of its import in doctrine. Holy these men were, undoubtedly; but, was it not possible that the divine light which guided the Apostles — who had been taught by the Master Himself — might fail to reach the disciples who had not been so inspired ? What Saul wanted above all else was the assurance that the truth which had come to him by means of a supernatural vision was the direct outcome of the Mosaic revelation. Christ, he understood, had asserted that He came to fulfill the Law, not to

destroy or change it. His teachings when applied in practice, would of necessity uphold the reverence hitherto exacted by the legal prescriptions of the Temple and the synagogue.

The Church, he reasoned, being a divine institution intended supernaturally to safeguard and guide man prone to err, must possess infallible authority in demanding of her members faith and obedience. This purpose might still be frustrated by any interference of human policies unless the believer had the assurance not only of the divine origin of the Law, but of its being in the keeping of a permanently infallible authority. From the beginning Moses had been the unerring leader to whom the inspired ordinances of the Hebrew Church had supplied those supplementary ministries which were to ensure a continuous growth.

The like necessity of an assured guidance, over and above the light which had so far led him on, caused Saul to seek in the Christian

religion a *directing* and *governing* priesthood over and above the code of legal doctrine and the sacrificing ministry which called for divine worship. Israel was the first-born of God's election, and through her the Messianic communication was to be made and extended to all races and nations, to the end of time. Under such conditions the language of Moses could not remain the exclusive medium of interpreting the divine will and wisdom. This fact he had gleaned from his studies at the University of Tarsus. He understood how the philosophy of the Orientals and the Greeks partook, in some of its phases, of the light that had come to the Hebrew Patriarchs who preceded Abraham and Moses. The great philosophers of the Pagan world followed the instincts, natural and supernatural, of the soul in search of truth and of some lofty ideal of which, in a limited way, they were made participants. The conditions created by a wider application of the Mosaic Law and Wisdom would lead to the adoption of means

of propaganda, extending the communication of graces flowing from the true religion whose author was God himself.

There could be no well-grounded opposition between the old Church and the new, despite the enmity which the Temple authorities at Jerusalem had manifested towards Christ and his preaching. As a matter of fact, Saul found that Christ's apostles and disciples still carefully observed the ordinances of the Mosaic worship, its sacrifices, fasts, and devotional exercises on Sabbaths and festival days. They simply insisted that the Messianic prophecies had been fulfilled in the coming and the resurrection of their Master — a fact which added to their devotions certain religious practices to mark this event. They had lost none of their former reverence for the Hebrew priesthood and worship, though they might not approve the individual conduct of some representatives of that ancient and divinely instituted cult. Had not their Master, after healing the lepers, said to them, "Go to the

priests and offer the gift which Moses commanded to be given to them"? In like manner He had preached to the multitudes: "The scribes and Pharisees sit on the chair of Moses: All things therefore which they shall say to you, *observe* and *do*: but according to their works do ye not."

The doubt which troubled Saul was: To what extent did the priesthood with its legitimate head in the Holy City continue to exercise their authoritative ministry? Did the institutions of Levitic and sacrificial service, the sacred cycle of the feasts and fasts which the Jews observed undergo any notable modification? They were not abrogated, for Jehovah had declared them perpetual through David and his descendants.

Manifestly, if the divinely instituted requirements of true worship were not to be discontinued, they must become a part of the new teaching that was to embrace the larger circle of the world of Gentiles, privileged henceforth to share the Messianic in-

inheritance. To all but the narrow-minded and and sectarian Jew the Mosaic Law — with its precepts of worship, its liturgical cycle of feasts, its sacrificing priesthood and its ordinances of Temple discipline — could be but a preparation for the great Messianic advent foretold by the Prophets. Thus far, the Hebrew Church had been, as it were, the gateway leading into a Sanctuary of the Church ultimately established by the Redeemer. He, the Incarnate Son of the Triune God, was to rule the new kingdom to which all men were to be admitted. This implied a promise of far wider scope than was manifested in the Old Dispensation.

But here a difficulty presented itself: If Christ had commanded obedience to the Mosaic Law and its priesthood at Jerusalem, and an application and extension of it to the Gentile world which would embrace all nations, where and with whom was this obedience hereafter to be lodged? The Jewish priesthood, with its organized hierarchy

headed by the High Priest and the Council of the Sanhedrim, was still in existence. Christ's Apostles and disciples continued to go to the Temple for sacrifice and public prayer, as their Master had done and bidden them do. Was Saul to reject this Jewish authority, whose commands he had hitherto obeyed in good faith? Yet such appeared to be the import of the heavenly admonition: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

To this doubt the answer of Ananias had offered some solution in suggesting that, although the High Priesthood of the Temple and its Council had hitherto been the legitimate authority in the Church, Christ by a sovereign appointment had transferred that authority to Peter, one of His immediate Apostles. Since, however, the High Priest at the Temple in Jerusalem derived his commission directly from Almighty God, the appointment of Peter should indicate a conflict of ecclesiastical authority, unless the Hebrew Sovereign Pontificate were explicitly

abrogated. Was such an assumption justified?

The doubt seemed reasonable. It could be met only by the singular combination of facts which had made the authority of the High Priest in Jerusalem cease at the very time when Christ appointed Peter the head of the Apostles and His representative in the new Church, which was to be one, holy, and *Catholic*, whereas it had thus far been exclusively Hebrew and national. The record of the appointments of the Chief Priests who ruled the Jews under the Roman government, at the very time when Christ named a Supreme Pontiff for the universal Church, clearly shows the abrogation of priestly Supremacy at Jerusalem which passed into the hands of the civil authorities exclusively, as appears from the following account.



CHAPTER TEN

A SCHISMATICAL PRIESTHOOD

IT WILL be remembered that Annas had become High Priest at Jerusalem while Cyrenus was completing his second term as governor of Syria. When Valerius Gratus entered upon the procuratorship of Judea, Annas, by his personal influence, managed to secure the office of High Priest successively for four members of his family — Ishmael, Eleazar, Simon Ben Kamith, and his son-in-law Caiphas. The rabbinical records also mention Jonathan, another son of Annas, and Theophilos, his brother, as holding the office while Vitellius was governor of Syria. A condition of simoniacal appointments for this office continued under Herod Agrippa, which linked the duties of the sacred office with the political activity of the secular rulers. It was this condi-

tion that made possible and necessary the creation of a legitimate head of the Church of Christ, with a title exclusively divine, nullifying the appointment of anti-pontiffs who owed their authority to political intriguing contrary to the interests of religion. Against the involved political appointments of the Temple party which supported the sacerdotal claims, loomed the solemn declaration by Christ, the Son of God that Simon Peter (whose very name served as a symbol of his predestined call) was to be the Chief Priest of the Church of the Messianic fulfilment. To him the Master had said, within the hearing of His disciples:

“I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. XVI : 18-19).

The Beloved Disciple John, companion of Peter, likewise records how the Master had given to Simon Peter a special mission of feeding His sheep and His lambs, which implied the sovereign authority to direct, govern and teach Christ's flock.

In later days Simon Peter was in position to remind the elders or bishops under him, that they were to unite with him to

"feed the flock of God, taking care of it not by constraint but willingly, according to God; not for filthy lucre's sake, but voluntarily; neither as lording it over the clergy, but being made a pattern of the flock from the heart, so that when the Prince of Peace appears they shall receive a never-fading crown of glory" (I Pet. V: 2-3).

The superior position thus assigned to Peter as High Priest of the New Law necessarily implied the prerogative of constant divine guidance or inerrancy in matters of interpretation. Such infallibility had been an essential part of the functions entrusted to the office of the

High Priest holding the *Urim* and *Thummim*. It was a power independent of personal virtue, as in the case of Caiphas, who in condemning Christ prophesied "to destruction." But Christ had assured Peter of a special protection against the abuse of this prerogative when He had said to him:

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have thee and sift thee as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail thee not. And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Saul's remorse, and the reflections which it begot, made him likewise realize the iniquitous part played by the authorities of the Temple, in seeking to frustrate the designs of God. The priests prodded on by the ambition of Annas and his son-in-law Caiphas appeared to him in their true light. The dissensions of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and their insidious and low-minded bigotry, contrasted strangely with the integrity of Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus, and those members of the

Sanhedrim who had defended Jesus in the Council chamber. He began to see more and more the justice of the indignant censure of the Nazarene condemning the ambitious hypocrisy of the adulterous Herod. The charges of seditious plotting and of inciting men to rebellion, which had been advanced against Jesus, were easily traceable to demagogues like the Galilean Judas, John of Gischala, and the Gerasene brigand leader Simon, son of Gioras. Their movements were aided by Eleazar, the priest-impostor who had secretly proposed the abolition of sacrifice in order to ingratiate himself with the emperor.

Since the Messianic fulfilment was to be demonstrated (as the devout followers of Moses believed) by the faithful devotion on the part of the priestly leaders, the actual conduct of those at Jerusalem was calculated to frustrate the designs of Jehovah. The Aramaic writings revered and read in the rabbinical schools of the Hebrew Synagogue, denounced the criminal actions of the Sanhe-

drim, and seemed to justify a new interpretation of the divine promises made to Israel:

"Behold the days shall come, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and of Judah: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them out of the land of Egypt; for this covenant they made void. Behold the day cometh, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, and it shall not be plucked up and shall not be destroyed any more for ever."¹

Long ago Ezekiel, the contemporary of Jeremiah, at Babylon, had announced this change as a forerunner of the conversion of the Gentiles:

"I will gather you from among the peoples, and I will take away the scandals and abominations from among them, giving them one heart. I will put a new spirit into their bowels, that they may walk in my commandments and may be my people, and I may be their God."²

¹ Jer. XXXI : 27-40.

² Ezek. XI : 17-19.

And again:

"The land that was untilled shall become a paradise: in this shall the house of Israel find me. I will multiply them as a flock of men, as a holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts. And I will pour upon you clean water and will cleanse you."¹

It may, at intervals in his reading of the Messianic prophesies have occurred to Saul that the Saviour who was to restore the ancient glory of Israel as a kingdom on earth, might appear as the lowly son of a carpenter, who would endure ignominy and suffering, becoming an object of persecution and shameful death because men failed to understand that his kingdom was not of this world. But now he clearly saw the Messiah in this light. He recognized in Him the Christ of whom Isaiah wrote:

"Arise, be enlightened; for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The

¹ Ezek. XXXVI: 35 ff.

Gentiles shall walk in thy light and the kings in the brightness of thy rising,”¹

yet who also appeared as one of

“the most abject, a man of sorrows, without beauty or comeliness, who was sacrificed because He so willed it, and who was led as a sheep to the slaughter, not opening His mouth.”²

The Lamentations of Jeremiah and the predictions of Baruch, with other rabbinical traditions embodied in later books of Ezra, though not read in the synagogues, bore witness to a similar nature of the Messianic advent. As a student under the influence of Gamaliel at Jerusalem, and while a disciple in the schools of Tarsus, Saul had become familiar with the apocalyptic writings of the Hebrew Fathers. Among these was the book known as the “Ascension of Moses,” manifestly the work of a devoted Pharisee relating the past and future history of his nation in the language of Moses. This book spoke of

¹ Isa. LX : 1-3.

² Isa. LIII.

the ultimate destruction of the Temple, and prophesied a period of calamity which was to be the beginning of a new national era. All such accounts were in agreement with the faith of the Christian converts at Damascus who had witnessed the trial and condemnation of Jesus before Pilate. They recalled the cruel treatment of the Christ,

"despised and most abject of men; a man of sorrows and affliction who has carried our infirmities, being made a leper and as one struck by God. He was wounded for our infirmities and bruised for our sins, that by His chastisement we might be healed.

"All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of all. He was sacrificed of His own will, led like a dumb sheep to the slaughter, not opening His mouth."¹

In the light of these prophetic utterances Saul felt the increasing grace of his regeneration through baptism. It was far more than

¹ Isa. LIII : 3 ff.

a mere cleansing from sin, more than the act of incorporation into the chosen family of God's children. In himself he saw fulfilled the Hebrew seer's words: "I will pour out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,¹ and everyone who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; for in Mount Sion shall be salvation.²

Saul thus gradually realized the facts about the Messiah which more and more clearly explained the wonderful apparition on the road to Damascus. He understood the special grace conferred upon the Apostles and disciples through the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, when Peter and the Eleven had received the gift of tongues. Manifestations of a similar heavenly ordination had taken place in the days of Samuel, when the son of Cis was received among the prophets *speaking in a new tongue*; and again, when his ancestor, Israel's first king, went to Najoth

¹ Zach. XII: 10.

² Joel II: 32.

in Ramatha, where the spirit of the Lord moved him to speak as a prophet. Saul needed no further proof to convince him of the fact that the Apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost, spoke and were heard in diverse tongues by the devout Jews assembled in Jerusalem, men of every nation under heaven — Parthians, Medes, Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphilia, Egypt and part of Lybia; Cretans and Arabs, and men from the imperial city of Rome. Such exceptional powers conferred by the Divine Spirit gave comfort, and light to see the truth, and a supernatural courage to announce this truth before the mighty kings of this world.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE DIVIDING LINE

OF OLD, the office of High Priest had been hereditary, and the descendants of Aaron retained it for life. The sons of Levi, the tribe of Judah, and the members of the house of David enjoyed distinct and permanent privileges in connection with the holy ministry of the Temple. Through succeeding ages there had been no changes in this godly appointment, though at times members of the sacred College had proved themselves unworthy of their high calling. The first notable instance of a departure from tribal inheritance of the priesthood occurred under Antiochus Epiphanes, who arrogated to himself the right of deposing the Sovereign Pontiff Onias. This breach of the Law was soon repeated; and when, under the imperial rule, Roman governors began to con-

trol the service of the Temple, simony became a matter of regular political intrigue. Saul seems to have received his mandate through Theophilus, who acted in the name of Caiphas and whose tenure of the Pontificate lasted from Pentecost (A. D. 37) until the arrival of Petronius at Jerusalem some months later. After that time the holders of the title of High Priest had changed frequently, according to the temporary favoritism of the civil rulers, albeit the Annas party had retained its influence against the extreme nationalists in Judea for more than a decade. Nor was it clearly specified how far their jurisdiction might extend in regard to the application of penal justice, sanctioned by the synagogal Law.

All this revealed to Saul an aspect which convinced him that the ecclesiastical institution to which he had hitherto given his undivided allegiance and devotion, had separated and ceased to be divinely approved. The disorders that had caused the Jewish Pontiffs to

become the sport of political intrigue, were of a schismatic nature, and pointed to the abrogation of their sacred office in favor of a new priesthood — that of Christ — which would govern His Church as had been foretold by the prophets.

Reasoning thus, and under the influence of the vision and its warning, Saul continued to grow in the conviction that the representatives of the Jewish priesthood who had crucified the Messiah and who were conniving with the Herodian party, acted the part of God's enemies. The Roman authorities had repeatedly endeavored to place the emperor's statue in the Temple, as one of the divinities to which Jewish worship was to pay tribute. True, these schemes had failed but this was chiefly because Herod Agrippa, recently appointed King of Judæa, had delayed to carry out the imperial suggestion through motives of personal policy. There was no assurance that future governors would continue this course; rather, it was to be expected that they, with

the connivance of the High Priests, would succeed in desecrating the old sanctuary by converting it into a pagan temple.

Saul meditated and prayed, hoping thus to gain definite light pointing to a dogmatic faith in Christ that would confirm the Code of Moses. Accordingly, he sought light on three things chiefly:

1. An organic institution such as the Hebrew Church, with a hierarchical government consisting of a High Priest, a body of local rulers presiding over the different synagogues or communities, and a corps of Levites and minor ministers accredited to serve in the sacrificial worship.
2. A code of moral and devotional discipline, uniform in its essentials but adaptable to the time, place, and circumstances involved in the appeal to the conscience of different races, nationalities, and separate groups of the faithful, subject to the same hierarchical headship.
3. Lastly, as the basis of this organism and its disciplinary management, there must be a definite body of doctrines, the meaning of which could be interpreted through the medium of a

common language, by a supreme Judge whose spiritual discernment would be guided by the Holy Ghost as the final test on earth of the Divine Revelation which had inspired the Mosaic Code.

Indications were not wanting in contemporary literature, that the doctrine of an infallible head and a hierarchical body of Christ's Church was being taught by the Apostles and disciples throughout the various missions. Their hearers committed to writing the disciplinary code which allowed full freedom of racial, national, or corporate activity in the exercise of religious worship. The Christian converts, many of them members, like Saul, of Pharisaic families, had been able to collect and treasure the teachings of the Master in fragmentary yet well-authenticated notes. The scribes were, if not Apostles, in most cases intelligent and sincere converts. Their memoranda were held sacred, under titles such as *Logia* (which contained the words they had heard fall from the lips of Christ); or again

Didache, or *Didaskalia*, which were records of the teachings remembered by their hearers, who felt impelled to instruct others in the beautiful wisdom of Jesus. Lazarus with his sisters, and Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, some of the Apostles and other Christians, eager to preserve the sayings of the wonderful Master whom they recognized as the Messiah, had religiously copied the striking words they had heard fall from His lips. These instructions, which were employed to teach neophytes, proved in every case to confirm the Old Law, and also to elevate its precepts by the infusion of a charity and grace through counsels of virtue. This was an added charm of attraction for those who had been separated from their kindred in the old faith by the ostracism which the followers of Christ had to endure. Of these things Saul became in time aware.

The teaching of Christ, and His example, thus inculcated the necessity of striving for perfect love of God above all, and for love of

His children. This required self-denial, patience under suffering, and the ministry of mercy to all men without distinction. Poverty, the absence of all worldly splendor and show, and charity without earthly reward had been exemplified in the daily life of the Master. He would not have His disciples called *Abba*, nor claim possession to land, since He Himself had had no place whereon to rest His head. Such doctrine demanded drastic changes in the life of those who wished to follow Him, changes that would eliminate the existing conventions of social or religious conduct. His Apostles were to possess but one garment, to travel without scrip or staff. They were to preach the kingdom of God, trusting to the inspiration of the moment; to salute no man by the way; and to bear insult with meekness, by "offering the other cheek." If this was Christ's precept, how was it possible for the new priesthood to preserve the old hierarchical order, which implied a certain

outward splendor and the assertion of personal priestly authority ?

The answer must be sought in the words and actions of the Master Himself. His coming to earth and His assuming the form of man had a twofold significance. He willed to atone for man's disobedience by the exercise of humility and suffering. To an extent, His disciples were to share in this atonement according to their capacity and grace. Yet the abasement of the Incarnate Word was not to alter the established order of civil and religious society, nor to interfere with its development as time went on. Had not Christ Himself obeyed and respected this order by attending the Temple services, paying tribute to Cæsar and enjoining obedience to the legal executives of the Mosaic ordinances ? It was sufficient proof that the old order would not be altogether discontinued. While conditions in the early Christian Church did not permit the complete and elaborate exercise of those

priestly functions that had taken place in the Temple of Jerusalem, certain ordinances of Church government and ceremonial were dispensed with until the community grew. Peter and the Apostles ordained by Christ, while they preached and practised poverty, did nevertheless perform their priestly functions in a manner corresponding to the dignity which, they had been taught, was due to God's representatives in the ancient priesthood.

Such was the theology which serious reflection begot in Saul's mind while contemplating retirement in total separation from his former surroundings. The Hebrew and Hellenistic converts whom he met no doubt strengthened his conviction so that his past religious training became but a preparation for the revelation of the New Law which he had received in so marvellous a manner.

Arabia, the desert in which Moses had conversed with Jehovah, and where, many years after, as Jewish Liberator, he had worked out

the plan of national independence which he was to exercise in company with his brother Aaron as consecrated High Priest — Arabia offered a fitting solitude where Saul might learn the further counsels of God which were to make him the companion of Peter and the Apostle to the Gentiles.



CHAPTER TWELVE

SAUL'S VISIT TO PETER (SOVEREIGN PONTIFF)

THE LACK of opportunities to preach Christ crucified to the Jewish colonists at Damascus was a sudden check to the ardor which animated Saul after his return from Arabia. True, he had the sympathy of the Christian converts whom he had met in the house of Ananias; but this was of little avail in the apostolic work for which his heart yearned. He found that many of the disciples of Christ had left Damascus for the colonies at Antioch and in the provinces, where they hoped for greater freedom; and he soon discovered that there was bitter opposition to him and secret plottings against his life on the part of his enemies. It was but natural that under these discouraging conditions his thoughts should

turn to Jerusalem, the Holy City, with its halo of ancient glory and past blessings, to which he felt now drawn with irresistible longing. Promptly following the impulse he entered this new field, prepared to face, if need be, the humiliation and danger of an encounter with his old associates of the Pharisaic party. These trials would be offset by the prospect of meeting the Apostle whom Christ had made the Chief of His Church — the head of the Apostolic Twelve, whose preaching and miracles were being reported from all parts of Samaria, Galilee, and the countries beyond the Jordan. In Peter he was sure to find right counsel amidst the difficulties that now threatened him.

Fearless, conscious of his superior education and, especially, of a directly divine call, Saul now set his face toward the city of David. If he met any of his former friends, the younger Hillel or Gamaliel, they were likely to introduce him to the Apostles, none of whom he yet knew. When he reached the

Holy City he found that most of the followers of Christ, among them the Apostles, were scattered; for, although active persecution had ceased for the moment, owing to a political deal of the governor with the more influential members of the Pharisaic and Sadducaic parties, only Peter and James the Less, "brother of the Lord," as he was called, had remained heading the Christian fold. They remembered Saul as the emissary of the High Priest and the enemy of the Christians, since only vague rumors had as yet reached Jerusalem of the Cilician's sudden conversion. There was still among the Christians a suspicion that the apparent change of heart in the former notorious leader of persecution might be but a disguise to entrap them. Here, then, was a fresh obstacle to Saul's progress which he had not foreseen.

Happily for the new Apostle, he met at this juncture a Cyprian Levite named Joseph Barnabas, one of his former associates in the schools of Tarsus, accessible to young Hebrew

students. Barnabas would introduce him to the head of the Christian community; for Ananias had made known among his friends the details of Saul's conversion. Through Barnabas Saul was recommended to the head of the Apostles, Peter, who soon recognized the qualities of mind and heart which distinguished the former fanatic persecutor from Tarsus.

Like Barnabas (the brother of Mary John Mark), Saul was superior to the Galilean fisherman in education, in familiarity with the ways of the secular world, and in knowledge of the religious traditions among the scribes. A certain independence, not to call it pride, of temperament might have lessened Saul's respect for the sturdy and single-minded Apostle now presiding over the young Church of Christ, had it not been for the lessons of humility which he had recently learned from the Christians at Damascus — which humility he now saw plainly reflected in Peter, their Chief. The intimate intercourse which fol-

lowed between these two, soon revealed to Saul the perfect harmony of God's designs in ordaining the Old Testament worship of the Jewish synagogue as a prelude to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth which was to be its fulfilment. He knew of the prophecy which Christ had made in Samaria to the woman and her friends at the well near Mount Gerizim: "You shall neither on this mountain nor at Jerusalem adore the Father." The time had come for Peter to send Saul to the nations to proclaim the universal and true spirit of adoration.

For the moment it seemed indeed that Saul might aptly fulfil this mission at Jerusalem, where he could influence the Hellenistic element of the Jewish party, and through his preaching and labor, atone for the part he had taken in the death of Stephen. In this way he could hope gradually to regain the confidence of the proselytes, who were less likely to continue in the distrust of him which his former associations with the Pharisaic

party had engendered. Such a course was moreover indicated by the fact that there was none among the Twelve who appeared to have been charged with the special care of the Hellenist converts of Jerusalem. Only Peter and James the Less had remained in the Holy City. The other Apostles were preaching to their fellow-Hebrews north and east of Judea. Here then, among the Hellenists, was a field open for this new disciple—a Roman citizen from Tarsus, who could at the same time claim ancestral connection with Jews of genuine Mosaic belief.

Only a fortnight had passed after Saul's introduction to Peter when the latter was called away from Jerusalem, leaving the ministry of the local Christian community in the hands of James, cousin of Jesus. Saul, now left alone with the Hellenists, did not receive from them the welcome he expected and needed that he might confirm them in the belief that the Mosaic writings were an announcement of the coming of Christ as the

Messiah. Maryllus was procurator of Judæa at the time. He affected not to sanction persecution of the Christians; yet he showed no inclination to protect the Hebrew preacher from Tarsus from his enemies. In consequence there grew amongst the hostile Alexandrine Jews a secret conspiracy to destroy Saul, whom they regarded as a disturber of peace in the community. They might have been successful had not the Apostle been forewarned of their plottings. One day, while he was in the Temple, an angel appeared to him and commanded him to leave Jerusalem without delay.

Forced once more to fly for his life, Saul determined to return to Tarsus, his earlier home. Here indeed he might make converts, since none of the Apostles had as yet gone to Asia Minor, the nearest centre of the Christian community life being Antioch.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

JAMES, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM

IT WAS to be expected that, after Peter had been called away, Saul would turn to James, "brother of the Lord," placed in charge of the fold in the Holy City. The Chief of the Apostles was not likely soon to return to Jerusalem, being obliged to minister to the spiritual wants of the entire community at home and abroad.

James the Less — so called to distinguish him from the elder brother and namesake of John who had enjoyed the special affection of the Divine Master, and who had witnessed the glorious Transfiguration on Mount Tabor — possessed particular gifts of administrative ability. His piety and devotion to the Law, together with marked eloquence, had caused him to be chosen from among the Apostles

as a leader. "Tell these things to James and to the Brethren" ¹ was a phrase common in the mouth of Peter in the ordering of Church discipline. James, too, was to take a chief part in preaching indicated by his appeal: "Men, brethren, hear me." ² He had, moreover, been vouched the distinction of a separate call from the Risen Lord, when "seen by James, then by all the Apostles." ³

These things Saul came to know while still in the Holy City. They inspired him with a peculiar and reverent confidence in James, heightened by the sacred relationship which the son of Cleophas bore to the sister of Mary, the Mother of Christ. The close friendship existing between the holy women gathered about the Blessed Virgin, included Mary the mother of James and Joseph. The charity that bound together those who had been the first to witness the glorious Resurrection, could not fail to communicate itself to Saul, during

¹ Acts XII : 17.

² Acts XV : 13.

³ I Cor. XV : 7.

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his short stay in Jerusalem and give him a knowledge of the wondrous things which the Master had done. What he thus learned contrasted strangely with his knowledge of the old Hebrew formalism and priestly pretensions. Whereas his sensitive mind reflected on these things, causing bitter tears over his past blindness, his intercourse with James led him to read and ponder anew the predictions of the prophet lamenting the miseries of the Jewish people and the humiliations of Jerusalem:

"How doth the city sit solitary, how is the mistress of the Gentiles become a widow, weeping. There is none to comfort her. Her friends have become her enemies and despised her. Her adversaries have become her lords and are enriched.

"The Lord hath spoken against her for the multitude of her iniquities. Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore is she become unstable. Those that should honor her have despised her, because they have seen her shame; but she hath turned her back upon them.

"The feet of Jerusalem are covered with filth, for she hath not remembered the right of her path. The Lord hath taken away the mighty

men out of her midst; hath destroyed her chosen ones. He hath trodden the winepress for the virgin daughter of Sion. The Lord said:

“I called for my friends, but they deceived me. My priests and my ancients have grown weak while seeking after food. The Lord hath covered with obscurity the daughter of Sion. He hath destroyed in His wrath the strongholds of Judah. He hath overthrown the walls of Jerusalem.”

Saul felt that he would share in the new priesthood established by Christ, who had demonstrated His godhead, and given His Apostles the assurance:

“You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming among you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth.”

Ordained to the apostolate by the imposition of the bishop’s hands he was ready to meet future opposition:

“You shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.”

The priestly dignity thus conferred gave a double sanction to the mission of teaching all nations "to observe whatever I have commanded you." The command in Saul's case was unequivocally divine, and in a sense superior to that of all the disciples excepting Peter. Even in the case of Matthias, elected to take the place of the traitor Judas Iscariot, the appointment was made by lot to mark the episcopate, and that under Peter's direction. If Saul's mission was a direct, divine appointment, subject only to the judgment of the Chief of the Apostles, Peter — Christ's Vicar on earth, — it carried with it the episcopal authority of ordaining priests.

This distinction of a hierarchical apostolate and priesthood similar to that instituted of old under the Mosaic Dispensation, became henceforth a dogmatic conviction with Saul. He realized that he had been elected to a mission of responsibility equal to that of James Alpheus, involving obligations far greater than

the mere Levitical functions. Saul, like Peter and James, had personally seen Jesus and received from Him the appointment to the sacramental office which Christ had imposed upon His Apostles. The consciousness of this fact imparted fresh courage to his soul, and made him feel the importance of his ambassadorship as, once more, he left Jerusalem for his home at Tarsus.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE ANTIOCHIAN BISHOPRIC

THE APOSTLES were spreading the Gospel of Christ throughout Palestine. They sent the disciples — who, for the most part, were Hellenist Jews familiar not only with the Hebrew, Syriac, and Greek languages but with the local dialects in the lands of the Dispersion — to strengthen the faith of refugees at Antioch and in the Phoenician coastlands of the Mediterranean Sea. Among the latter were Mana-son, the Cypriot, Rufus and Alexander with their father Simon of Cyrene, who, like Joseph Barnabas, held fast to their faith in the Mosaic Revelation while openly professing their belief in the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Christ.

A central bishopric had been established at Antioch under the authority of Peter. Hither

the missionary leaders repaired from time to time to confer, with a view of preserving unity of doctrine and discipline among the scattered Christian communities.

In the meantime Saul of Tarsus was laboring in Cilicia to propagate the evangelical message among his countrymen, who were strangers to the Mosaic traditions. The Palestinian brethren rejoiced in the success of Saul, who felt secure in the accomplishment of his new-found apostolate among the Gentiles. But the precept of unity which the Master had bequeathed to His disciples as a last testamentary injunction on the eve of His death, demanded a closer communication between the Gentile and Hebrew communities when local contentions and partisan agitation threatened to create permanent schism among the faithful. To forestall such danger Barnabas determined to bring Saul into authoritative relation with the apostolic government at Antioch. A discussion among the converts

concerning liturgical and disciplinary differences gave him the desired opportunity, which he promptly seized, to go to Tarsus in order to confer with the Apostle. The outcome of their conference was the return to Antioch of both — Saul finding means to put his flocks in Asia Minor under proper supervision during his prospective absence, which lasted, as had hardly been foreseen, with but brief intervals, for a number of years.

Meanwhile the anti-Jewish policy of the imperial government at Jerusalem caused distrust and hostilities among local factions, bringing about sundry calamities affecting the Hebrew converts. The general distress was heightened by a widespread famine calling for instant aid from the Christians of the Dispersion. Barnabas acted as the medium of relief by promptly undertaking the mission of mercy and carrying alms from his brethren of the North to the sufferers in Judæa. Saul likewise proved a powerful factor in solicit-

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ing beneficent and generous co-operation among his Gentile converts. Of the Apostles remaining at Jerusalem continuously during these troubled times there was none but James Alpheus.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

PAUL—(MISSIONARY TITLE)

HAVING partly accomplished the work of unification and of relief in the Judæan province, Saul and Barnabas visited Salamis, where the Jewish community had a synagogue. Here Saul ventures to preach, disposed to rouse the conscience of his Hebrew brethren before turning to the Gentiles. From Salamis they travel to the western end of Cyprus, stopping at Paphos, where Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, is brought into the Church of Christ, to become a co-laborer in the work of evangelization with Saul, who thenceforth uses his name Paul as a passport and missionary title in his sojourn through the Roman provinces.

From Paphos the Paulist missionaries sail north to Perge, in Pamphylia. Here John Mark abandons the party, returning to Jeru-

salem. Paul and Barnabas continue their journey to Pisidia and Iconium. The bitter opposition of the Jews in the Lycaonian capital causes the Apostle to be apprehended as a disturber of public order. He is stoned and driven forth, but, with Barnabas, he finds refuge in Lystra. Having worked a miracle upon a cripple of this city, the two are hailed by its pagan inhabitants as Jupiter and Mercury (Saul), sent to them from Olympus. But again the hostile attitude of the Jews forces them to leave, Paul being stoned and left for dead among the tombs. They finally reach Derbe, in Lycaonia, whence they are counselled to return to the cities through which they have just passed, in order to confirm the faith of those who listened to their earlier appeal. Their second visit leads to the appointment of elders, bishops, and vicars, who are to govern the churches established in Lystra, Iconium and the Pisidian Antioch.

Reports having now reached the ears of Paul and Barnabas of fresh animosities which

have been aroused by an admission of converts without circumcision, they hasten back to the Syrian Antioch in order to assist in settling the disputes. Their apostolic mission-work had lasted nearly four years, since their departure from Palestine. At Antioch they were able to report to the assembled brethren the wondrous things which God had done through them in opening the door to the Gentiles. They were then informed of the details regarding the obligation insisted upon by the Hebraic-Christian authorities to confer circumcision upon the converts.

Simon Peter, being by virtue of his headship of the Twelve the primate of the Church Universal, had retained his old reverence for the Holy City where Jesus had made His home before His death on Calvary, and where the disciples still met in the Cenacle, or in the home of the Lady Mary or the House of Martha. These sacred places were to Peter continuous and vivid reminders of His Master. Hither, too, all the Apostles loved to resort,

in order to renew their combined pledges of fidelity. Here they could meet the Virgin-Mother of Christ, whose Immaculate Heart was the temple of the Holy Ghost, the Seat of supreme wisdom.



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

A PAPAL DECISION

IT WAS to Jerusalem, therefore, that the Apostles and the ancients of the Church were called to confer on the matter under dispute, and then to come to an agreement which would have the force of Canon Law for the entire community. In the Holy City Paul and Barnabas found besides Peter, the two Apostles, James the Less and John the Beloved Disciple, the latter charged with the care of his Divine Master's holy Mother. Of the Twelve no others were present when the decision was rendered by Peter. The Chief of the Apostles arose to address the council, and in so doing he reminded them of his authority not only over the Hebrew converts to whom he had principally administered as an Apostle, but likewise over the Gentiles com-

mitted to the special ministry of Paul (Acts XV: 7; and 16-19):

“Men, brethren, you know that in former days God made choice of us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe.

“And God, who knoweth the hearts, gave testimony, purifying their hearts by faith. For which cause they who from among the Gentiles are converted to God, are not to be *disquieted*.”

These words were confirmed by Barnabas and Paul, as also by James. The latter laid emphasis upon the reorganization of the Church by citing the words of God through the mouth of the prophet Amos (IX: 11):

“In that day I will rebuild the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down — that the rest of men may seek after the Lord, and all nations upon whom my name is invoked.”

It was James, the bishop of the Palestinian Jews, who uttered the last words in the assembly. He presented an authoritative for-

mula of their Pastoral Letter which was to be sent to the churches. In it, while the converts are, according to Peter's decision, declared freed from the Mosaic obligation of circumcision, they are instructed to refrain from certain practices, savoring of pagan worship, which would cause needless suspicion among their Hebrew brethren as to their orthodoxy and thus render difficult a friendly intercourse among the various members of the Christian community.

The next step of the Council at Jerusalem to secure complete harmony between Hebrew elders and the Church at Antioch, was the appointment of the Delegation which was to carry the letter of dispensation from circumcision to the Syrian and Cilician Christians. The head of the apostolic delegation was Paul, being accompanied by Barnabas, Silas, and Judas Barsabas, who by word of mouth were to act as interpreters among the people.

In the meantime affairs at Jerusalem took a turn which, providentially, brought about

the change which Barnabas and Saul had intended to promote. For some time the Jewish population of the Holy City had been harassed by the wild and ambitious dreams of the emperor Caligula, who wished to be recognized, by the worshippers in the Temple, as their ruler by divine right. To this end he had dispatched Petronius as Legate to Syria — in place of Vitellius — with the injunction that he erect, as already mentioned, a gigantic statue of himself in the Hebrew Sanctuary. The abomination of desolation foretold by the prophet Daniel seemed about to be verified. A spell of unrest threatening immediate popular uprising caused the new governor to delay for a time the execution of the imperial project. But a dread of impending persecution and calamity spread among the Hebrew converts to Christianity. These in their fear appealed to their fellow-Christians at Antioch. The answer of the latter took the form of a mission ostensibly to relieve the scourge of famine and pestilence among their brethren in

Judæa. Agabus, an eloquent Jew living in Antioch, had aroused the Christian community to the full realization of the evils threatening Jerusalem. Moved by the plight of their brethren, the more wealthy inhabitants of the Syrian capital at once set about collecting funds to avert further suffering among their fellows.

Quite unexpectedly the news came from Rome of the assassination of the emperor. The proposed placing of his statue in the Temple was abandoned. Under Herod Agrippa, appointed ruler of the Palestinian provinces in return for services he had rendered the opposition, the imperial policy was changed. This secured to the Jewish element a certain amount of favorable protection, through Herod. The malice of the Pharisees and Sadducees, however, soon drew again hostile attention toward the Apostles, and caused James Zebedee to be put to death. Peter, after escaping miraculously from prison, sought safety outside the city.

While opportunity might have returned for the preaching of Saul in Jerusalem, he found his chief field of action still in Antioch and the Syrian province. Later on he extended his apostolate farther north and east to the provinces governed by Antiochus of Commagene, who was favorably disposed toward the Jews. Soon, however, Saul was to meet serious opposition and dire persecution, against which his profession of Roman citizenship did not avail.

With the death of Herod (A. D. 44) Judæa reverted to its former status as a province of Rome, subject to a procurator. Herod of Chalcis, brother of the late king, by favoring the Jewish element at the court of Emperor Claudius, secured for himself jurisdiction over the Temple. This gave him the right to nominate the High Priest and the keeping of the sacred treasury under the Roman procurator. Serious-minded and devout Jews who still held to their belief in the advent of a Messiah, revolted against the abuses connived at by the

nominal guardians of the Temple. In their distress they now turned toward the Apostle James the Less, who, as the saintly elder of the Church at Jerusalem became to them the authoritative exponent of the Divine Law.

When the scarcity of food and the horrors of disease prevailing during the festival season in the Holy City had driven many of the famine-stricken people to Samaria and Syria, there arrived in Jerusalem a princely Babylonian woman, Queen Helena of Adiabene, with her son Izates.¹ They had been previously moved to the Jewish faith and wished to relieve the distress of the sufferers. In doing so they could not but be witnesses of the ministry of charity which the Christians exercised both in the house of Martha at Bethany and at the mercy-hospital of Mary John Mark. These generous converts surely met and were influenced in favor of Christianity by the disciples who were active in distributing the alms collected from the faithful in Antioch

¹ See "The Houth of Martha at Bethany," Chap. XVIII.

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and Cilicia for the relief of their brethren. Saul felt secure in following the divine impulse, despite the recent warning he had received to flee from Judæa.



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PASTORS AND COADJUTORS

AMONG the converts whom Saul brought with him from Antioch was Titus, born of Gentile parents. He had been admitted into the fold of Christ without circumcision. His virtue and talents were well known. He would become a witness at the proposed synodal meeting, urging the admission of uncircumcised proselytes to Christian fellowship. The manifest superior mental endowments and piety of the young neophyte would, it was hoped, impress favorably the Hebrew extremists who still insisted upon literal obedience to the Mosaic ordinance.

But here again disappointment awaited the Apostle, for when the matter was actually brought up in the assembly of Christians Paul found himself again confronted by the

most bitter prejudice. The older Hebrew converts went so far as to insist that Titus, being an uncircumcised Gentile, defiled them and was not entitled to eat bread with them. The resentment resulting from this harsh decision threatened to create a schism. To avert this Paul yielded, and he brought his young friend among the Hebraic Christians to undergo the ceremonial rite of circumcision. Thus peace was restored for a time among the brethren. The Apostle conciliated his opponents by showing that he was willing to accept a compromise in a case where the Law might be differently interpreted by two parties equally sincere. The acts of the Apostolic Council on this occasion, though not plenary, left the matter open; and our two Antiochian legates, Saul and Barnabas, returned to their northern mission leaving no apparent animosity behind them.

The Twelve — as the assembly of Apostles chosen by Christ to represent the government of His Messianic kingdom was called — had

never hesitated to recognize Peter as their divinely-assigned head since the appointment which had taken place at Cæsarea-Philippi. Jesus had stopped on the road and asked the disciples: "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" They had answered, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elias, others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Then to the question, "But who do *you* say that I am?" Simon Peter had replied, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God!" — And Jesus answering said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: that *thou art Peter* (kephas, a rock) *and upon this rock I will build my Church*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall also be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

That this authoritative designation was meant to mark an actual primacy of the Apostolic College which, after the defection of Judas was enlarged by the appointment of Matthias, and later of Paul and Barnabas, became clear from what transpired on the morning of the Resurrection when the Saviour appeared to the disciples assembled in the Cenacle and spoke thus to them: "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." A few days later, while the disciples were gathered in the mountains of Galilee, the Divine Master had given them this additional mission, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; for remember I am with you all days even to the end of the world."

Saul clearly understood all this. It indi-

cated that his mission though divine was dependent upon Peter as head of the newly organized Church. The authority of the scribes and Pharisees who had hitherto exercised priestly power in the name of the Most High, had now been abrogated. The Law of Moses was elevated to a higher plane — that of self-denial, charity, and the evangelical counsels.

In this spirit the heads of the newly established churches associated with themselves clerics, such as Timothy, Titus, Tychicus and Apollo, to assist them in the apostolic ministry. These were to preach, catechize the neophites, administer certain sacramental functions, and aid in directing the material progress of the religious communities. To some of them, especially gifted, like Andronicus and Junias, who bore the title of prophets, was by preference assigned the task of interpreting the Sacred Scriptures. Others exercised the minor offices of doorkeepers, chanters and lectors transferred from the synagogal service.



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

CANONICAL LEGISLATION

WHEN the task of welding the various Christian members into unity of ecclesiastical discipline had been accomplished, Paul felt an urgent desire to revisit the brethren in the cities wherein he had preached the Gospel and established bishoprics. He would gladly have taken with him Barnabas, but the latter would not go without his young relative John Mark. The desertion of Mark on their former missionary journey into Asia was to Paul a sign of weakness indicating a lack of courage and of readiness to bear the unavoidable hardships of travel through unfamiliar lands. Hence he would not consent to have the companionship of the young Hebrew. Barnabas then declined to accompany Paul, resolved to take his relative with him to Cyprus in the hope

that he might train him to the apostolate by a different experience. Later, Mark became a devoted disciple of Paul, having learned through Barnabas to bear the trials which had repelled him at first.

Through all these excursions, amid dangers by land and sea, from false brethren and open enemies, Paul, who had spontaneously accepted the leadership, managed to organize churches and ordain priests and bishops, leaving the ecclesiastical government of the different congregations in the care of faithful and careful disciples. Renewed acquaintance with local conditions after years of absence, brought him back to the bishoprics founded by him in earlier periods, and enabled him to consolidate, correct and increase the organs of orthodox teaching and combined apostolic activity.

Codes of Canon Law were thus fashioned in rudimentary form, which settled doubtful issues such as the demand of circumcision for converts from paganism; the participation with idolaters in their public worship; the

regulation which forbade mixed marriages; the observance of fasts and feasts, of Sabbath celebration in the Breaking of Bread, of sacramental baptism, confirmation, penance, and matrimony.

The legislation, in harmony with the dogmatic and disciplinary canons formulated in the Apostolic Council at Antioch and Jerusalem, was at intervals confirmed by Epistles addressed to the different communities of Christians, and their pastoral guides, wherever Paul had founded churches. These pastoral letters had their precedent, as well as their motives, in similar written episcopal addresses to the Hebrew and Asiatic churches by James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and by Peter and John, caring for the flocks under their metropolitan direction. Jude also, the brother of James of Jerusalem, writes in defense of the Christian faith to the converts from Judaism in Palestine. In the meantime another important agent of missionary success had arisen in Sylvanus (Silas) of Jerusalem.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

DIOCESAN EXTENSION

PAUL had found in Sylvanus a man after his own heart. Like himself, a Roman citizen, cultured, a devout convert, Silas (as his friend called him) was competent to interpret the Messianic message to Jew and Gentile alike. The two had worked together successfully thus far at Jerusalem and at Antioch, and were now agreed to strengthen and extend the foreign mission. Timothy, whom Paul had baptized at Lystra — where he met the mother, Eunice, a converted Jewess married to a Gentile husband — was to accompany them, since he also knew the country.

They travelled by land along the coast as far as Derbe, through Lystra and Paul's old home Tarsus, into Lycaonia and Phrygia. On his former tour the Apostle had only touched

the borders of Bithynia. He was now bent upon entering that missionary field, when a mysterious vision pointed westward and urged him to change his plans. A man had appeared to him in a dream begging him to bring the message of Christ to Macedonia. Shortly after this Paul meets at Troas the young physician Luke, a convert from paganism, who offers his services to the Paulist party as a guide into Macedonia and Achaia, with which territory his previous travels as medical attendant of the merchant expeditions along the Mediterranean Sea had made him thoroughly acquainted.

At Neapolis, on the Macedonian coast, they land and proceed to Philippi. Here the Apostle is induced to cure a girl slave possessed by a demon. The act incurs the jealous anger of her pagan masters, who had made gain out of her pretensions as a soothsayer, and they succeed in arousing popular prejudice against Paul and in causing the local authorities to apprehend and scourge him, imprison-

ing all his companions. A terrific thunder-storm at night, and the bold demand of Paul for redress, as due to his Roman citizenship, bring about the release of the missionaries, who pass on to Thessalonica. Hither also the hostility of the Jews pursues them. They are attacked while in the house of a Hellenist, Jason, with whom they had found refuge. Paul and Silas manage to escape in the dark and reach Berea, where for a time they find protection and rest. Soon, however, Paul's persecutors reach him again, forcing his flight by vessel along the eastern coast of Greece as far as Athens. Silas and Timothy remain behind at Berea. The former rejoins Paul later at Antioch; while Timothy, after going to Athens at Paul's request, returns shortly after to Thessalonica in order to strengthen the brethren converted during the missionaries' previous sojourn among them.

At Athens a new field appeared to open for the missionary activity of the Apostle. After preaching as usual in the market-place he is

urged to enter the academic halls of the Areopagus, and to appeal to the members of the Stoic and Epicurean schools, with whose philosophy his earlier studies at Tarsus had made him familiar. Some of these Greeks, among whom Dionysius, a judge of note, and a noble woman, Damaris, accept the Gospel; others scoff and dispute the doctrine of the resurrection and the final judgment. Soon Paul leaves the city, seeking a hearing at Corinth, some forty miles distant, and celebrated for its commercial prominence. Here he is met by Aquila and Priscilla, converts recently banished from Rome for their faith, by the edict of Claudius that expelled Jews and Christians of Hebrew extraction. Aquila, a native of Pontus, belonged to a guild of tent-makers, the trade which Paul had learned at Tarsus. They contracted with the Apostle a friendship which was to last, and which caused them to follow him later to Cenchræ and Ephesus.

After making some notable converts among the Corinthians, with whom Paul spent nearly

two years, aided in his preaching by Silas and Timothy, a flourishing church was established under the tolerant protection of the Roman proconsul Gallio, brother of the Stoic philosopher Seneca and uncle of the pagan poet Lucan. Leaving the Christian community in trustworthy care, and promising to return to them later, Paul followed his impulse to go back to Jerusalem, under a sacred vow, for the Pentecostal feast. Before leaving Corinth he was moved to write an Epistle to the Romans; for a new longing began to seize him to visit Rome, the See of Peter, where, as Paul had learned from Aquila and Priscilla, the name of Christ had received a hearing among high and low, the fact causing apprehension in the palace of the Cæsars.

In truth he was consumed with anxious zeal to have part in the work of evangelizing the great pagan Babylon of the imperial world. Hence he writes:

"I am assured of your love. Therefore I have written to you boldly that I might remind you

of the grace given to me by God to be the minister of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, in the power of the Holy Ghost. You know that I have preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem as far as Illyricum, where it was not known before. But now, having no more place in these countries, I have a great desire these many years to come unto you. As soon as I begin to take my journey into Spain I hope that, as I pass, I shall see you and be conducted on my way there by you, after having first enjoyed a visit with you."

He shows a certain modest reserve, as if to indicate that he is conscious of Simon Peter's presence among them. Despite his call to preach to the Gentiles, he feels he may not trespass upon sacred ground occupied by another and higher authority. But he wants the prayers of his friends:

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, through Our Lord Jesus Christ and by the charity of the Holy Ghost, that you help me in your prayers for me to God; that I may be delivered from the unbelievers that are in Judæa. Let me come to you with joy, by the will of God, to be refreshed by you."

His restless desire for conquest of souls drove Paul to leave Palestine again. This time he started from Antioch, passing through Galatia, Phrygia, and Central Asia, in a direction contrary to that previously taken. Meanwhile the Faith was being defended at Corinth by Apollo, a Jewish teacher from Alexandria, who had received the baptism of John and was now eagerly preaching in the synagogue the fulfilment of the prophecies accomplished in Christ. Apollo's friendship with Aquila and Priscilla had gained for him a more accurate insight into the principles and precepts of the Christian religion, and thus he was able greatly to confirm the Gospel amongst Hellenists and Gentiles, being both learned in the Scriptures and singularly eloquent. Paul was informed of the growing number of conversions at Corinth, across the *Ægean* Sea. Hence, accompanied by Luke, Timothy and other disciples whom he meant to place in charge of the different churches that gave promise of independence as episcopal sees, he

resolved to tarry at Ephesus. He had promised the Ephesians a second visit and, finding many of the disciples of the Baptist willing to enter the Church of Christ, he preached to them and baptized those of the Jewish faith who were rightly disposed.

The numerous converts made by Paul among the Hebrews in Ephesus caused the local heads of the synagogue to organize open opposition. The Apostle thereupon denounced their bigotry and turned to the Gentiles. Accepting the invitation of a scholarly academician named Tyrannus, he taught five hours daily in the school of the Gentiles. His arguments were directed chiefly against the superstitions of the local cult, with its magical art and its worship of Diana. Paul brought about a wholesale destruction of the literature and idolatrous symbols which had hitherto engaged the popular belief and practice. This resulted in a fierce opposition on the part of the populace, led on by the Ephesian silversmith Demetrius, who fostered the local idol-

worship because of his trade of furnishing silver images of Diana. Paul found it best to leave the city for a time, to avoid further hostilities. He visited Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Corinth. Then he turned back into Macedonia. At Philippi Luke had joined him. Anxious to facilitate apostolic visitation on their journey back, Paul had bidden his other disciples (among whom Tychicus, Trophimus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Sopater, and Secundus¹) to sail to Troas, where he and Luke would meet them. Timothy and Erastus were left to supervise the episcopal churches in Macedonia.

Paul travelled to Troas, Assos, and Miletus, in which latter city he met the ancients (elders) of the church of Ephesus who were loath to see him depart from Asia. But he was eager to return to Palestine, and finally he arrived at Tyre, on the Syrian coast. Here he and his companions remained for some days, but were warned by the brethren against going on to Jerusalem, where Paul's enemies

were lying in wait to destroy him. The Apostle had made a vow, however; so he continued his journey, first going to Cæsarea and then to Jerusalem. He arrived in the Holy City for the Pentecostal feast, after an absence of nearly four years, conscious of having accomplished the evangelization of the Gentiles to whom he had been sent, and confident that the growth of the Church in Asia and Greece was assured by his foundations of episcopal sees in the central cities.



CHAPTER TWENTY

ROMEWARD MOVEMENT

WHEN leaving Timothy and Erastus in Macedonia, Paul before setting out for Jerusalem had said to them: "Now I must go to Rome." His wish was to be fulfilled, but first he would be subjected to bitter trials and persecutions that awaited him in the former Holy City. Upon his arrival he at once sought the Bishop of Jerusalem, the Apostle James. To him and his senior clergy he made his report, telling of his missionary success among the Gentiles. Paul's friends rejoiced at what he told them. But knowing the deep-rooted prejudice which zealots among the Jewish converts still cherished, they bade him avoid any expression in public that might cause his enemies to say that his proselytizing was directed against the Mosaic Law and the traditions which seemed to them, according to the divine promises,

their exclusive privilege. There was among the Jewish converts a tendency to shun intercourse with pagans and the uncircumcised; and this acted against the harmony which was so essential an element of freedom of worship at Jerusalem during these days of tension. Therefore James and the elders deemed it prudent to counsel some public demonstration on Paul's part which would overcome the prejudice of the Jewish Christians against him and his methods. As a Pharisee he had periodically renewed his vows of Nazirite abstinence. This involved a public profession of personal consecration, a shaving of the head and observance of the Mosaic fast. Paul found no difficulty in complying with the suggestion. To make the act of fidelity to the Law still more impressive he associated himself with four other Israelite converts who were under a similar vow, and with them he made his offering before all the people in the Temple.

The secret enemies of the Apostle, however,

were not to be balked in their predetermined efforts to expose him as a destroyer of the Law and of Jewish prerogatives. They brought fresh charges against him, succeeding in causing an uproar which ended in Paul's being dragged out of the Temple amid violent demonstrations which aroused the Roman tribune Lysias and the military guards of the city. Accused of sedition and treason the Apostle was put in chains and led to the nearby prison (Castle), the civil authorities being under the impression that he might be the notorious Egyptian rebel who some time before had led a band of four thousand men to rise against the government.

In self-defense Paul, as they reached the steps of the Castle, asked of the tribune leave to speak to the throng, stating that he was a "Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." He then turned to the multitude, suddenly silenced, and to the astonishment of the gaping crowd he addressed them in Hebrew:

"I am a Jew born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the truth of the Law as given to our Fathers, zealous for the Law, as also you are at the present time.

"With this mind I persecuted unto death men and women, binding them and delivering them to be cast into prison, as the High Priest and the members of the Sanhedrim will testify.

"For they gave me letters to the Synagogue at Damascus, authorizing me to bring the Christians converted from Judaism to Jerusalem, that they might be punished.

"But as I was going on my way to Damascus as directed, there appeared at mid-day a bright light that shone round about me. I was hurled to the ground, and as I lay on my face I heard a Voice saying: 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Then I asked, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And the answer came to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.'

"Now they that were with me saw indeed the light but they heard not the voice of him that spoke with me.

"To my question, 'What shall I do, Lord?' the Voice replied, 'Arise and go to Damascus, and there it shall be told thee what thou art to do.'

"Being blinded by the brightness of the light,

I had to be led into the city by my companions. There, Ananias, a faithful disciple of Moses — as all Jews who dwell there would testify — came to me, and as he spoke my sight returned and I looked upon him. Thereupon he said, 'Brother Saul, the God of our Fathers hath preordained thee to do His will and to recognize the Just One Who bids thee to be His witness, before all men, of the things thou hast seen and heard. Delay not, but arise and receive a baptism in His name which will wash away thy sins.'

"After that I went to Jerusalem and while praying there in the Temple, Jesus, the Just One, appeared to me whilst I was in a trance and said: 'Hasten and leave Jerusalem, for they who are here will rise against thee, unwilling to receive thy message from me. Go, I will send thee to the Gentiles, far away.'"

The fury of the leaders was once more aroused as Paul's last words fell upon the listening crowds. They saw themselves threatened with the loss of their influence and exclusive privileges as the elect race and chosen people of God. A wave of indignation was set in motion which gradually swept the multitude, and cries of rage were hurled against

the Apostle, and likewise threats against the tribune for having prevented an immediate execution of vengeance upon the prisoner. This caused the latter to hurry Paul away from the scene. Hoping, however, to conciliate the crowd and prevent a disturbance that might bring him censure from the governor of the province, Lysias commanded that Paul be taken to the Castle and tortured, and thereby induced to retract the insult he had offered the Jews. But Paul was not to be intimidated. He knew the Roman as well as the Jewish Law, and being both a Pharisee and a citizen of the Roman empire he protested:

“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman before you have legally passed sentence to prove his guilt?”

This was indeed a serious matter. To scourge a Roman uncondemned by the imperial court might create complications affecting the position of the judicial authorities. It was the Jewish priests, the tribune reflected, who had made the accusation. He suspected

them of caste-jealousy against Paul. It would be prudent to leave the judgment in their hands.

On the following day the judges of the high court of the Jewish Temple were notified that Paul would be placed on trial before them and if proved guilty the sentence would be ratified by the Roman tribunal. Paul was brought before the Sanhedrim. He noticed that the judges were partly of the Pharisaic and partly of the Sadducean sects. Taking advantage of their known difference of religious belief he emphasized his own claim as a Pharisee regarding the resurrection of the body, in opposition to the heresy of the Sadducees who denied the existence of a spiritual life after death in which the body was to partake. He at once caused a dispute among the judges which became so animated and personal that the tribune was again forced to interfere and to remove Paul. Imprisoned anew in the Castle the Apostle was informed there, by a relative, that the Jews were organizing a secret con-

spiracy to capture and slay him. Paul bade his keeper, a centurion, to take his informant to the tribune, Claudius Lysias. The latter on receiving the information placed the prisoner in the care of a large body of soldiers and had him safely conducted, at night, to Cæsarea, with a letter to the governor Felix. The message read as follows:

“Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix, greeting:

“This man (Paul) being taken by the Jews, and ready to be killed by them, I rescued with a body of soldiers, understanding that he is a Roman.

“I found that they accused him concerning questions of their Law, but laid nothing to his charge worthy of death or imprisonment.

“When I was told of ambushes prepared for him I deemed it proper to send him to thee. Of this I have given notice to his accusers, so that they might plead before thee.”

The governor was at Cæsarea, and having heard Paul’s defense kept him confined in Herod’s judgment-hall to await the arrival of

the High Priest Ananias and the advocate Tertullus, who were to present the accusations of the Jews. Five days elapsed. Then the witnesses appeared and asserted against Paul that he raised seditions among the Hebrews, everywhere declaring for the Nazarene; also that he had profaned the Temple. Felix listened to these charges and then invited Paul to defend himself. The Apostle's reply was a decided but respectful denial of the accusations. He stated that as a Pharisee he deeply revered and faithfully observed the Law of Moses; that he had likewise, on all occasions, shown his reverence for the Temple and its legitimate priesthood, for such was the command of Christ, whom he felt bound to follow as the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

Felix realized that these Jewish leaders were animated by jealousy. He therefore ordered that Paul be kept in confinement, though free to receive visits from his friends; and he promised that he would give him another hearing when Lysias came to add his testimony. The

hearing took place, but judgment was deferred because Felix hoped that Paul's friends might offer a bribe for his release. No bribe was offered, however, and Paul was kept a prisoner for two years, after which Felix was succeeded by Portius Festus.

The new governor was well informed regarding Paul's case. The Apostle's old Jewish accusers once more requested that Paul be brought to trial, and this in Jerusalem. Festus decided, however, that the trial would take place in Cæsarea, and he himself would come to sit in judgment. A week went by, then the court was opened. The old charges were vociferously repeated by Paul's enemies and refuted by the Apostle, who spoke in his own defense. Festus was in doubt. He knew that the accused was innocent, but he desired to conciliate the Jewish element over whom he had been appointed to rule. He would let them deal with Paul as Pilate had done with the Nazarene. They might kill him; he would wash his hands of the matter. With

this intention in mind he turned to the accused and said:

"Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me regarding these things?"

The answer came with Pauline directness:

"I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no injury, as thou very well knowest. For if I have injured them, or have committed anything worthy of death I refuse not to die. But if none of these things whereof they accuse me be true, no man may deliver me."

"I appeal to Cæsar."

Festus knew that Paul had friends at Cæsarea who, if he were condemned, would bring the injustice to the notice of the imperial court and cause his (Festus') removal from the office of Roman governor. Hence, after consultation with his own council, he wisely concluded to withhold sentence and shift the responsibility. "Hast thou appealed to Cæsar?" he exclaimed. "To Cæsar thou shalt go."

Paul was bound for Rome at last.



CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

AT ROME

PLACED in the military care of the centurion Julius, for the journey from Cæsarea to Rome, Paul was delivered into the hands of Fennius Rufus, Prefect of the pretorium. This officer had been given to understand that his prisoner was innocent and the victim of Jewish fanaticism. The charge of having at one time fostered revolt and treason against the government was serious, however, and had to be disproved. Accordingly, the accused was kept under surveillance although permitted to enjoy the privilege of free intercourse with his friends. He was simply a prisoner under parole free to choose his lodging.

This state of affairs continued for many months without Paul being molested by the imperial officers. His old enemies would no

doubt have continued their efforts to destroy him by casting suspicion on his past conduct; but they knew that it was useless to force the judgment of the Roman court, all the more as they had only recently lodged complaints before the emperor against Herod Agrippa because of the latter's interference with the Temple authorities. In this case (Herod's) the imperial sentence had apparently been in their favor; but the contention was too fresh in the mind of the Roman authorities to permit the Jewish malcontents to bring up the case of Paul.

The Apostle knew the situation, and seeing his opportunity to gain a hearing with the Jewish brethren at Rome, requested shortly after his arrival to be allowed to confer with the local rabbis in their synagogue. These men were as yet ignorant of the prejudice which the Palestinian Jews had against Paul; and the convert-friends of the Apostle had spoken in the highest praise of his faith and zeal, since he had written to them of his

longing to labor among them. Among Paul's friends who at intervals visited the imperial city were Timothy, Luke, Tychicus, Aristarchus, Demas, John Mark; also Aquila and Priscilla, who were given to much travel; and later we find at Rome Epenetus, Ampliatus, Stachys, Persis, Trophimus, and others like Pompania Græcina, Praxedis, Pudentiana, and Priscilla — the latter wealthy ladies who had embraced the Christian faith secretly, so as to retain their influence in behalf of the poor flocking around the priestly messengers of Christian peace and consolation.

Neither were the Christians in Asia and Achaia to forget Paul. His letter to the Philippians, written from the Italian capital at this time, bears witness to the charity of Lydia whose messenger, Epaphroditus, returns from Rome with the Apostle's affectionate promise that he will endeavor to visit them again, and that he is sending them his beloved disciple Timothy in the meantime. A similar correspondence is kept up between Paul and the

Christian communities at Colossa, Ephesus, and at Laodicea.

In the spring of A.D. 64 the indictment against Paul is removed and he is set at liberty. His long-cherished hope to visit Spain seems on the point of realization.

Meanwhile at Rome fresh persecutions against the Christians are being revived through the ambition of Nero. The spectacular burning of the city is laid to the charge of the disciples of the Nazarene. The Apostles Peter, James Minor, and Jude, evading for a time the vigilance of their active enemies, continue the work of preaching to the Jews in the Diaspora, exhorting them by pastoral letters to preserve the faith. Paul also writes with the same purpose to Timothy, his vicar to the Gentile communities.

Before long we find the Apostle again on the high seas, taking the route which he had followed fifteen years earlier — to Troas, Miletus, through Achaia, to Nicopolis — exercising the functions of episcopal visitor to

the missions, and appointing new overseers in place of the old disciples, for whom he opens fresh avenues of activity.

Once more he meets the minions of the law, who make him prisoner, suspected of sedition. He again asserts his Roman citizenship and is taken for trial to the imperial city which he had left three years before. The damage done by the great conflagration had by this time been largely repaired through Nero's efforts to rebuild. Cast into prison under the Nero-nic régime, Paul is kept from communicating with his old friends. In fact, some of these have deserted the faith and, like Phigellus and Hermogenes, have turned witnesses against him during his absence from Rome. Onesiphorus is one of the few who gain access to him in prison and are able to console him. Later on Luke returns, and through the influence of converts among the senatorial families, the Apostle, broken in health, at the age of seventy years, is comforted by the sympathy of Pudens and his family, by Eubulus,

Claudia, and Linas. From his prison he writes to Timothy, at Ephesus, asking for the parchments and cloak which he had left with Carpus at Troas in the hope that he might return there (II Tim. IV: 13).

That Paul, who recognized Peter's high priesthood, exercised in turn a reciprocal influence upon the Head of the Church, had already become apparent in the attitude which the great Tarsian Apostle took at the Council of Antioch, when the question was mooted of admitting converts into the Church without circumcision. On that occasion Peter had yielded to Paul (Gal. 11:11-20).

With equal liberty of spirit the Apostle had as we saw refused the companionship of John Mark, whom Peter himself had instructed and who had been selected by Barnabas to accompany him in his first journey with Paul. The latter had chosen Silas (Sylvanus) as associate in his further apostolic work, who, like Timothy and Titus, was to exercise the office of the episcopate, presum-

ably with the approval of the Head of the Twelve. The Holy Spirit was thus gradually leading Paul to merge his apostolate into that of Peter. Both men had, by the same inspiration, been impelled to choose the Roman capital as a future stronghold of the Catholic Church, and a center of unity whence the voice of the Vicar of Christ could be heard throughout the entire world. Despite persecution, many Jewish converts and those from Gentile nations had drifted Rome-ward and found refuge and protection in a large and varied community in which commercial, political, and intellectual interests of an international character permitted a certain freedom of religious worship, creating sympathy between classes widely separated socially, which would have been impossible under less cosmopolitan conditions.

After the Gospel had been preached in the synagogues of Palestine and Syria, the Apostles went abroad to different countries where the exiled Hebrews offered a further field for

evangelization. James, brother of Jude, alone remained at Jerusalem. Peter now turned his attention to the Jewish residents at Rome whose ancestors had flocked thither before the reign of Judas Machabeus two centuries earlier, and who had taken possession of a quarter south of the Tiber. Emperor Tiberius had for a time forbidden the exercise of Hebrew worship within the city; but this prohibition had again gone into abeyance. Thus, Simon Peter, guided by Divine Providence, had come to Italy and there found a number of his countrymen who were as yet free from those prejudices and animosities against Christian converts that actuated the priesthood at Jerusalem. Soon also he found a hearing among the more influential inhabitants of Rome, the wealthy class and families of rank, these being attracted to Christianity by the somewhat austere but withal unselfish and virtuous conduct of their servants, and of the humbler population whom they knew to be followers of the Nazarene Prophet. Among those thus im-

pressed who had secretly embraced the Christian religion were the patricians Titus Flavius, Petronius and Aurelius, with their kin; likewise Pudens, of senatorial dignity, with his mother, and the ladies Petronilla and Priscilla, whom Peter was asked to baptize.

Conditions thus gradually shaped themselves which permitted the Chief of the Apostles to regard Rome as a stronghold whence — with due care to avoid needless suspicion of any disloyalty to the commonwealth or antagonism to the worldly power of the imperial master — he might safely direct the ministry of the Church of Christ not only in the city itself but throughout the other lands which had received the Gospel message carried by the Apostles. Shortly after this Peter addresses his encyclical letters to the brethren of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and beyond. Thus the Roman Pontiff begins the new apostolate that is to extend over the entire world.

Within less than twenty years after the

Pentecostal commission to the Apostles, Simon Peter had succeeded in establishing the central seat of the Church of Christ in Rome, with its essential elements of supreme jurisdiction over all the churches under their respective episcopal rulers. Gradually he secured complete harmony in the liturgical act of worship of the Breaking of Bread; in the sacramental administration of baptism; in conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost through Confirmation, and by priestly Orders and episcopal Consecration. It became plain that Christ's Church was to supplant the Synagogue of the Jewish faith.

These are the conditions which Paul met in his visit to the newly chosen "Holy City" where he went to satisfy the wish expressed in his Epistle to the Romans, "that I might leave some fruit among you, being ready to preach to you also that are in Rome." Simon Peter had in a manner paved the way for Paul's special work when he exhorted the Hebrew converts under his charge to have their "con-

versation good among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation" (I Pet. 11: 12). If the Head of the Church deemed it prudent to restrict for a time the open preaching of the Gospel in the streets and byways of Rome, those who read his words addressed to the flock found therein nothing that could expose them to the charge of disloyalty to Cæsar or of injury to their fellow-citizens. The teaching was brief, direct, and plain:

"Honor all men,
Love the brotherhood,
Fear God,
Honor the King,
Servants, be subject to your masters, not only
to the good and gentle but to the froward,
It is thanksworthy also, if for conscience to-
ward God a man endure sorrows, suffering
wrongfully,
Sanctify the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts,
being ready to satisfy everyone that asketh
you a reason for the hope that is in you,

As every man has received grace, let him minister the same one to another (I Pet. II : 16; III : 10).

Maintaining the authority and dignity of the Supreme Pontiff, St. Peter bids the bishops ("ancients" — of whose body he is the chief member, "an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ") to:

"Feed the flock of God,
Taking care of it not by constraint but willingly, according to God,
Not for filthy lucre's sake, but voluntarily,
Neither as lording it over the clergy, but being made a pattern of the flock from the heart — so that
When the Prince of Pastors shall appear, you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory."

These injunctions Simon Peter repeats to the very last, "to put you always in remembrance of them"; "for I think it meet to stir you up, being assured that the laying away of this my body is near, as Our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me. I will also endeavor that you frequently have, after my decease,

whereby you may be reminded of these things."

"For we heard from God the Father this voice coming down: 'This is my beloved Son — hear ye Him.' This voice we heard when with Him in the holy mount."

He continues:

"Behold this (second) Epistle I write to you, my dearly beloved, in which I stir up by way of admonition your sincere mind, looking for the coming of the day of the Lord. . .

"Waiting for these things, may you be found worthy, unspotted, and blameless in peace.

"Account the long-suffering of Our Lord, salvation; as also our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, has written to you in all his Epistles, speaking of these things; though there are in them certain matters hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (II Pet. III : 1-15).

Here we see the Sovereign Pontiff recognizing the inspired character of Paul's writings, while at the same time deeming that they require an authoritative interpretation in

order to prevent misunderstanding and schismatic separation calculated to destroy the unity of the universal Church over which he (Peter), as supreme Father of the faithful, is to watch.



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

UNION SEALED IN BLOOD

THE PERSECUTION which was to be the lot of the Apostolic leaders, would end for Peter in the Cross. He had vowed rather to die than to abandon the work committed to him by his Divine Master. At first it had seemed to his human prudence the better part to fly from his enemies at Rome; but as he sped out of the city at early dawn, along the Appian Way, he met the bloodstained figure of Christ bearing His Cross, Whose look seemed to ask: "Whither goest thou, Peter?" He at once recalled to mind that same reproachful gaze of Christ on the eve of Good Friday many years before; and now he turned to retrace his steps and accompany Jesus, and lo! the Vision vanished. In the eagerness of his present burning love he would throw caution aside

and let Nero's minions do as they listed, wreaking their spite on the Nazarene's disciples because these had brought humiliation upon the sensual hosts of the Palace and were alienating the noblest in the Roman court and army from the luxurious worship of the pagan gods of Rome.

The imperial Palace lay close to the Vatican. The Hebrew Apostle could not long escape the vigilance of its officers. Soon they apprehended him, on the charge of his being a suspect. They drew from his lips the open confession that he despised the idols which desecrated their Temples, and made naught of the flatteries intended to bring divine honors upon the emperor. They sent him to the Mamertine prison and kept him in chains, as one who had despised and insulted the majesty of almighty Rome.

Not many days thereafter the guards of the dungeons seized Paul, the Tarsian Jew, who being aware of Peter's fate proudly claimed association with him in the Christian

faith and defied the judges' threats that he would share the penalty of his imprisoned chief and the disgrace of being put to death despite his claim to Roman citizenship. To prove the reality of this threat they imprisoned Paul beside his chief in the Mamertine hold, and the prayers of the two were joined in gratitude that they were chosen to die for their Master. When the Apostle to the Gentiles avowed his joy over the prospect of martyrdom with Peter, loudly proclaiming that he gloried in the Cross of Christ, the judges be-thought themselves and separated the prisoners on the day set for their execution.

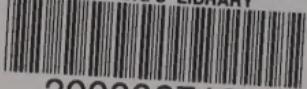
Peter, the Vicar of Christ, was sentenced to be nailed to the cross like Jesus. His humble prayer at the last that he be crucified head downward, moved the sheriffs to grant his wish. They could not understand the motive of the aged High Priest as he implored this favor, and they yielded readily enough to what appeared to them the innocent whim of an old man about to die, who by his fanatical

profession in Christ had harmed none but himself.

At the same hour in which Peter was being executed in the Vatican confines, the imperial soldiers led the Apostle of the Gentiles out on the Ostian Road, to the open spaces, about an hour's distance from the gate. There Paul laid his head upon the block and died by the sword for Christ, in intimate and lasting association with his chief, the Sovereign Pontiff of the Church of Rome.

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